



Afghan Spring

President Barack Obama shakes hands with Afghan President Hamid Karzai at the conclusion of their joint news conference in the East Room of the White House in Washington, Friday, Jan. 11, 2013.

(AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais)

**MARK LANDLER
M. R. GORDON**

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WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama, eager to turn the page after more than a decade of war, said Friday that beginning this spring U.S. forces would play only a supporting role in Afghanistan, which opens the way for a more rapid withdrawal of the troops.

Though Obama said he had not yet decided on specific troop levels for the rest of the year, he said the United States would accelerate the transition of security responsibilities to the Af-

ghans, which had been set to occur at the middle of the year, because of gains by Afghan forces.

Obama also made it clear that he planned to leave relatively few troops in Afghanistan after the NATO combat mission ends in 2014, saying those forces would be narrowly focused on advising and training Afghan troops and hunting down the remnants of al-Qaida.

"That is a very limited mission, and it is not one that would require the same kind of footprint, obviously, that we've had over the last 10 years in Afghani-

stan," Obama said after a meeting with the Afghan president, Hamid Karzai, at the White House.

It was the first face-to-face encounter of the leaders since May, and it underscored the quickening pace at which the United States is winding down its involvement in Afghanistan.

The war in Afghanistan was discussed in only general terms during the election campaign, but a series of decisions on troop levels and other issues is to be settled in the coming weeks and months.

Karzai raised no public ob-

jections to troop cuts, saying he had obtained two important concessions from the United States: the transfer of prisons housing terrorism suspects to Afghan control, and the pullout of U.S. troops from Afghan villages this spring.

Brushing aside questions about residual U.S. troop levels, Karzai said: "Numbers are not going to make a difference to the situation in Afghanistan. It's the broader relationship that will make a difference to Afghanistan and beyond in the region."

Karzai also said he would push to grant legal immuni-

ty to U.S. troops left behind in Afghanistan — a guarantee the United States failed to obtain from Iraq, leading Obama to withdraw all but a vestigial force from that country at the end of 2011. Obama's signaling of deeper troop cuts to come appeared to run counter to the approach favored by Gen. John R. Allen, the senior U.S. commander in Afghanistan. Two U.S. officials said in November that Allen wanted to retain a significant military capacity through the fighting season that ends this fall.

Continued next page

Obama Accelerates Transition Of Security To Afghans

Continued from front

Other military experts raised concerns that the United States might forfeit some of its hard-won gains if it moved to shrink its

they continued to benefit from U.S. and allied air power, logistical help and medical evacuations, as well as NATO advisers. Still, the public display of harmony by the two lead-

made by Afghan security forces. By spring, he said, nearly 90 percent of Afghans will live in areas where their own forces are in charge of providing security. At that time, U.S.

ghans would take the lead in any bargaining. "The United States has been very clear that any peace process, any reconciliation process, must be Afghan-led," he said. "It is



Afghan President Hamid Karzai gestures as he speaks with President Barack Obama during their bilateral meeting in the Oval Office of the White in Washington, Friday, Jan. 11, 2013.

forces in Afghanistan too quickly. James M. Dubik, a retired Army lieutenant general who led the effort to train the Iraqi army and is a senior fellow at the Institute for the Study of War, a nongovernmental research group, said that accelerating the effort to put Afghan forces in the lead posed risks.

"There will be insufficient combat power to finish the counteroffensive against the Haqqani network in the east," he said, referring to the militant group that operates in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Dubik also said the success of the effort to have Afghan forces lead this spring would depend on whether

ers was mirrored by their private discussions, White House officials said. Aides said the atmosphere was warm – "surprisingly so," in the words of one – given their often tense relationship. Obama and Karzai appeared to appreciate the candor of the exchanges, officials said.

For his part, Karzai sought to allay fears that he might not yield power after Afghan elections scheduled for next year. "In a year and few months from today, I will be a retired president," he said in a speech later Friday at Georgetown University.

Obama extolled what he said was the progress

and NATO troops will give up a combat role and revert to an advisory and support role.

The president's sanguine outlook, however, seemed at odds with a Pentagon report issued in December, which asserted that only one of the Afghan National Army's 23 brigades was able to operate independently without air or other military support from the United States and NATO partners.

The leaders reaffirmed their interest in a political settlement with the Taliban, with plans to open an office in Qatar as a locus for peace talks. But with negotiations at a standstill, Obama left little doubt that the Af-

not for the United States to determine what the terms of this peace will be."

The waning U.S. role in Afghanistan's future was evident when Obama was pressed about fears that women could face renewed discrimination after any settlement with the Taliban. He said the United States would speak up for the rights of Afghan women – rights that he noted were enshrined in the Afghan Constitution.

But he said it was up to the Taliban to adhere to the constitution and recognize that if they wanted to change how the Afghan government operates, they would have to do so in a lawful manner. □



Vice President Joe Biden meets with video game industry heads in Washington, Friday, Jan. 11, 2013.

(AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

Gun debate: Biden, video game industry heads meet

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The video game industry, blamed by some for fostering a culture of violence, defended its practices Friday at a White House meeting exploring how to prevent horrific shootings like the recent Connecticut elementary school massacre.

Vice President Joe Biden, wrapping up three days of wide-ranging talks on gun violence prevention, said the meeting was an effort to understand whether the U.S. was undergoing a "coarsening of our culture."

President Barack Obama appointed Biden to lead a gun violence task force after last month's shooting at a Newtown, Connecticut, elementary school that left 20 children and six educators dead.

"I come to this meeting with no judgment. You all know the judgments other people have made," Biden said at the opening of a two-hour discussion. "We're looking for help."

The gaming industry says that violent crime, particularly among the young, has fallen since the early 1990s while video games have increased in popularity.

There are conflicting studies on the impact of video games and other screen violence. Some conclude that video games can desensitize people to real-world violence or temporarily quiet part of the brain that governs impulse control. □

US govt. tells computer users to disable Java

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Department of Homeland Security is advising people to temporarily disable the Java software on their computers to avoid potential hacking attacks. The recommendation came in an advisory issued

late Thursday, following up on concerns raised by computer security experts. Experts believe hackers have found a flaw in Java's coding that creates an opening for criminal activity and other high-tech mischief.

Java is a widely used technical language that allows computer programmers to write a wide variety of Internet applications and other software programs that can run on just about any computer's operating system.

Oracle Corp. bought Java as part of a \$7.3 billion acquisition of the software's creator, Sun Microsystems, in 2010.

Oracle, which is based in Redwood Shores, California, had no immediate comment late Friday. □

US Dems urging Obama to take 'lawful steps' to avoid a default

J. WEISMAN

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WASHINGTON — The Democratic leadership in the Senate on Friday urged President Barack Obama to take "any lawful steps" available to avoid a default on the nation's debt if Republicans continue to press their demand that any increase in the government's borrowing limit be accompanied by spending cuts of the same magnitude. "In the event that Republicans make good on their threat by failing to act, or by moving unilaterally to pass a debt-limit extension only as part of unbalanced or unreasonable legislation, we believe you must be willing to take any lawful steps to ensure that America does not break its promises and trigger a global economic crisis — without Congressional approval, if necessary," wrote Sens. Harry Reid of Nevada, Richard Durbin of Illinois, Charles E. Schumer of New York and Patty Murray of Washington.

The letter signaled an escalation in the war of words over the federal debt ceiling, which could be breached in just weeks. Already, liberal intellectuals have been trying to rally support for measures to go around the Republican blockade, from declaring that the 14th Amendment gives the president unilateral authority to raise the debt ceiling to minting a trillion-dollar platinum coin that would be used to pay the nation's debts.

"All Americans, Democrats and Republicans alike, have a stake in ensuring that our country meets its legal obligations," the Democratic leaders wrote. "Financial markets have long viewed securities backed by the full faith and credit of the United States as the most trustworthy in the world. This lowers borrowing costs for homes, cars, and college for all Americans and strengthens our economy. □

Aboriginal chiefs, Canada PM meet amid protests

C. NORONHA
Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Thousands of Aboriginal rights activists protested Friday in front of Canada's Parliament as Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Aboriginal chiefs attended a summit to discuss disagreements over treaty rights and other grievances. The meeting divided the Aboriginal community, with some chiefs boycotting the summit because Governor General David Johnston,

with plans to meet again within a month to continue the dialogue on treaties and comprehensive land claims, said Aboriginal Affairs Minister John Duncan. There was no immediate comment from the chiefs after the meeting.

Atleo, the elected head of the Assembly of First Nations, Canada's main body of Aboriginal leaders, said earlier this week that some chiefs want the Harper government to review sections of two bud-

ment to ensure every Aboriginal community has a school.

The governor general was scheduled to meet separately with chiefs after the summit but some chiefs said that wasn't enough.

"They are meeting with him now, that was the appropriate response," Duncan said in response to questions from reporters about why Johnston didn't attend the meeting with Harper.

Among those boycotting was Chief Theresa Spence,

ties by altering the approval process for leasing Aboriginal lands to outsiders and changing environmental oversight in favor of natural resource extraction.

The "Idle No More" movement, which has shown unusual staying power and garnered a worldwide following through social media, has reopened constitutional issues involving the relationship between the federal government and the million-plus strong Aboriginal community.

Spence, who remains on a hunger strike and is camped out on an island in the Ottawa River near Parliament Hill, told the protesters before the meeting that Aboriginal people should have an opportunity to hold the government accountable for years of broken promises.

"This meeting's been overdue for so many years," she said.

Spence agreed to attend the ceremonial meeting with Johnston moments before it began Friday.

Other chiefs warned the protests will escalate unless Harper and Johnston agree to meet with them Friday together in one room at an Ottawa hotel on their own terms.

First Nations leader Gordon Peters of the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians threatened to block major economic corridors, such as border crossings to the U.S. next week. He said roughly 200,000 Aboriginals in Ontario would launch a "day of action" Jan. 16 if their demands are not met. First Nations would move to "stop roads, rails, transportation of goods," Peters said. "We just have to walk out on our land and stop it." Other chiefs criticized the boycott as extreme and counterproductive. □



Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence makes a brief statement on Victoria Island near Parliament Hill, Friday Jan. 11, 2013 in Ottawa.

(AP Photo/The Canadian Press, Adrian Wylde)

a representative of Queen Elizabeth II, did not attend. They argued his presence is imperative because he's a representative of the British monarchy and the talks center on treaty rights first established by the Royal Proclamation of 1793.

The meeting between Harper, other top government officials, National Chief Shawn Atleo and 20 other native Canadian leaders ended late Friday

get bills that amend environmental laws. They are also demanding that a formal process be established to examine long-standing treaties.

Atleo also had said he would demand a national inquiry into the disappearance or killings of hundreds of Aboriginal women over the past decades with little police investigation. He planned also to bring up the need for a commit-

who launched a liquids-only hunger strike a month ago to demand the summit. Spence, the chief of Attawapiskat, a northern Ontario reserve, has become a central figure of Aboriginal rights protests that erupted almost two months ago against a budget bill that affects Canada's Indian Act and amends environmental laws.

Protesters say Bill C-45 undermines century-old trea-

Police: deaf US man stabbed over sign language

BURLINGTON, North Carolina (AP) — Police in North Carolina say a deaf man was stabbed several times after his sign language was mistaken for gang signs by another man.

Burlington Police Sgt. Mark

Yancey said 45-year-old Terrance Ervin Daniels was using sign language with another deaf man. He said a third person saw them, thought they were flashing gang signs and stabbed Daniels with a kitchen knife.

A neighbor saw the victim and called emergency personnel. Daniels is in stable condition at UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill after the incident. Police arrested 22-year Robert Jarell Neal and charged him with as-

sault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill inflicting serious injury and felony assault on a handicapped person. He's being held in the Alamance County jail. It's not known if Neal has an attorney. □



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Arraignment in theater shooting postponed until March



Jessica Watts, whose cousin was killed in the Aurora movie theater shooting, speaks with members of the media following a court proceeding for Aurora theater shooting suspect James Holmes, at the courthouse in Centennial, Colo., on Friday, Jan. 11, 2013.

(AP Photo/Brennan Linsley)

DAN FROSCH
E. G. FITZSIMMONS
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CENTENNIAL, Colo. — The judge hearing the case against James E. Holmes, the gunman accused of killing 12 people and wounding dozens more at an Aurora movie theater in July, agreed Friday to postpone Holmes' arraignment for two months at the defense's request.

The judge, William B. Sylvester, of Arapahoe County District Court, had ruled late Thursday that there was enough evidence presented during a three-

day preliminary hearing for Holmes to stand trial on 166 counts of murder, attempted murder and other charges. But he agreed Friday to postpone the arraignment until March 12, to give Holmes' defense lawyers more time to enter a plea.

Sylvester said that while he empathized with the victims' desire to move forward, he decided it was appropriate to give the defense more time to prepare for the arraignment hearing, given the trove of evidence that needed to be reviewed. Prosecutors

had objected to the delay, saying they were ready to move forward with the case immediately.

Victims of the attack and their family members, sitting in the courtroom gallery here, were visibly upset at the prospect of having to wait for Holmes to enter a plea. As the lawyers and the judge discussed the matter, several victims and family members stormed out of the courtroom.

As the court was adjourning, Steve Hernandez, whose 32-year-old daughter, Rebecca Wingo, was shot and killed in the theater, shouted: "Rot in hell, Holmes!"

The outburst prompted the judge to reconvene the court and gently admonish Hernandez.

"I'm terribly sorry for your loss. And I can only begin to imagine the emotions that are raging," the judge said.

Hernandez, who was ringed by a group of sheriff's deputies and brought to the front of the courtroom, apologized.

The hearing has been under heavy security all week, with deputies using hand-held metal detectors to sweep each person entering the courtroom. And emotions have run high as prosecutors laid out their case against Holmes, a former neuroscience graduate student at the University of Colorado, Denver.

Earlier in the week, an agent for the FBI testified that Holmes told investigators he planned to blow up his apartment to create a diversion the night of the shooting. □



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Ecoterrorism suspect pleads not guilty

JEFF BARNARD
Associated Press

GRANTS PASS, Oregon (AP)

— A woman who turned herself in after a decade as a fugitive in the largest-ever U.S. ecoterrorism investigation pleaded not guilty Friday to conspiracy and arson charges in federal court. With Canadian citizen Rebecca Rubin, 39, sitting shackled in the jury box, Magistrate Judge Thomas Coffin ordered her to remain in custody and set trial to begin March 19 in U.S. District Court in Eugene, said Assistant U.S. Attorney Steven Peifer.

A federal indictment accuses Rubin of being a member of cells of the Earth Liberation Front and Animal Liberation Front known as The Family. Investigators blame the group based in Eugene for 20 fires across the West from 1996 to 2001 that did \$40 million damage. She turned herself in to the FBI last November at the Canadian border with Washington state. At the time, her lawyer said she wanted to get the case behind her. Defense lawyer Richard Troberman, of Seattle, did not respond to an email

seeking comment Friday. Investigators blame the cells for fires at a ski resort in Colorado, wild horse corrals in Oregon and Northern California, and lumber mills and U.S. Forest Service offices in Oregon.

Ten people pleaded guilty in 2007 to conspiracy and arson charges and were sentenced to prison. Two



Rebecca Rubin, 39, of Canada. (AP Photo)

others indicted in the case remain at large.

Rubin is specifically charged with helping set fire to buildings at the Vail ski resort to prevent expansion into habitat for the threatened Canada lynx, and to U.S. Bureau of Land Management corrals in Eastern Oregon and Northern California holding wild

horses rounded up from federal rangelands.

She also is accused of trying to set fire to a lumber mill office in Medford, Oregon. Rubin is not specifically charged with terrorism, but the indictment alleges she and other members of The Family tried to influence businesses and the government and tried to retaliate against the government.

At the time of the fires, the FBI characterized the Earth Liberation Front and the Animal Liberation Front as the top domestic terrorism threats in the nation.

The Family disbanded in 2001, but a federal task force known as Operation Backfire used an informant to pursue them.

By the time they were sentenced, members of The Family expressed regret and frustration that after all their hardships, they had accomplished practically nothing. A horse slaughterhouse in Oregon was never rebuilt, but the ski resort and ranger stations were rebuilt, timber companies stayed in business, and wild horses were still rounded up and removed from federal lands. □

No charges for NBC's host for ammunition magazine

ERIC TUCKER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — NBC television journalist David Gregory won't face charges for displaying a high-capacity ammunition magazine on his "Meet the Press" news program last month, prosecutors announced Friday. The District of Columbia's Office of the Attorney General, which handles low-level crimes, said criminal charges wouldn't serve the public's best interests even though possession of the magazine — capable of holding up to 30 rounds of ammunition — was clearly against local gun laws.

duct in this matter, especially in a city and a nation that have been plagued by carnage from gun violence." He said it was a "very close decision" to not bring charges.

Firearms laws in the nation's capital generally restrict the possession of high-capacity ammunition magazines, such as the one Gregory said he was holding up during a Dec. 23 interview, regardless of whether they're attached to a firearm. Punishment can carry up to a year in jail or a \$1,000 fine.

D.C. police say NBC asked for permission to use the clip during a segment and



This video frame grab image provided by "Meet the Press" shows host David Gregory holding what he described as a high-capacity ammunition magazine during a recent Sunday's program. (AP Photo/Meet the Press)

New Orleans: Judge approves police overhaul plan

KEVIN MCGILL
M. KUNZELMAN
Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A federal judge has approved a sweeping agreement between the Justice Department and the city of New Orleans designed to clean up the city's long-troubled police department, but Mayor Mitch Landrieu, who once strongly backed it, said the city wants to put the brakes on it because of costs.

The police department, which has been plagued by decades of corruption and brutality complaints, came under renewed scrutiny following a string of police shootings in the chaotic aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

In 2011, the Justice Department issued a scathing

report that said the city's police officers have often used deadly force without justification, repeatedly made unconstitutional arrests and engaged in racial profiling. The Justice Department's civil rights division also launched a series of criminal probes focusing on police officers' actions during Katrina's aftermath. Landrieu said Friday he asked U.S. District Judge Susie Morgan to delay final approval, largely because the Justice Department has also entered into a potentially expensive separate agreement with the New Orleans sheriff for reforms at the city-funded jail. Morgan, however, approved the agreement, calling it "fair, adequate and reasonable" in Friday's ruling.

The mayor said earlier that he was unsure of the city's next legal step. He noted that the city already has implemented many elements of the consent decree, including changes in the homicide bureau, the K-9 unit, sex crime investigations, use-of-force investigations and policies governing the way officers are hired and paid for private, off-duty security details. The Justice Department in a statement Friday night hailed the agreement as a "critical milestone" in reforming the police department. It did not directly address Landrieu's complaints but noted that the mayor himself had sought a comprehensive civil rights investigation of the department when he took office in 2010. □

D.C. Attorney General Irvin Nathan cited the First Amendment of U.S. Constitution that protects free speech in making his decision. "Influencing our judgment in this case, among other things, is our recognition that the intent of the temporary possession and short display of the magazine was to promote the First Amendment purpose of informing an ongoing public debate about firearms policy in the United States, especially while this subject was foremost in the minds of the public," Nathan wrote a lawyer for NBC. The issue of gun control has risen to the forefront of U.S. politics since the horrific elementary school shooting in Connecticut. Still, Nathan said, there were other legal ways to prove the point and that "there is no doubt of the gravity of the illegal con-

was advised that it would be illegal, though NBC has said it received conflicting guidance from other law enforcement sources.

Gregory held up the magazine as a prop during an interview on gun control with Wayne LaPierre, the executive vice president of the National Rifle Association, the most powerful gun lobby in the U.S.

"Here is a magazine for ammunition that carries 30 bullets. Now, isn't it possible that if we got rid of these, if we replaced them and said, 'Well, you can only have a magazine that carries five bullets or ten bullets,' isn't it just possible that we could reduce the carnage in a situation like Newtown?" Gregory asked, referring to the Dec. 14 school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, in which a gunman killed 20 children and six adults. □

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Sen. Rockefeller retiring after five terms

JONATHAN WEISMAN

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Sen. John D. Rockefeller IV of West Virginia, the scion of the Rockefeller family who established himself as a liberal voice in Congress, said Friday that he would retire in 2014 at the completion of his fifth term in the Senate. "As I approach 50 years of public service in West Virginia, I've decided that 2014 will be the right moment for me to find new

mies and deny real problems than find solutions." The speech was greeted with shock in coal-dependent West Virginia and led immediately to speculation that he would not seek a sixth term in 2014. Rockefeller's retirement could create an opening for Republicans in a state that is increasingly tilting from its once-solid Democratic roots. President Barack Obama won less than 36

oil tycoon, was always an unlikely representative of his hardscrabble state. He served as a VISTA volunteer in 1964, taking up President John F. Kennedy's call for service, then went on to be elected to the state's House of Delegates and eventually its governorship. In the Senate, he made his mark as a chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee and on domestic policy as a champion



Sen. John Rockefeller IV, (D-W.Va.) at the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington. Rockefeller, the scion of the Rockefeller family who established himself as a liberal voice in Congress, said on Jan. 11, 2013, that he would retire in 2014 at the completion of his fifth term in the Senate.

(Marty Katz/The New York Times)

ways to fight for the causes I believe in and to spend more time with my incredible family," Rockefeller said in a statement issued by his office. The decision was not a surprise. In June, Rockefeller took to the Senate floor to oppose Republican efforts to block a regulation on mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants, declaring, "The coal industry today would rather attack false ene-

percent of the vote there in November after Republicans waged a relentless campaign against what they called the president's "war on coal." Republicans persuaded their preferred challenger, seven-term Rep. Shelley Moore Capito, to enter the Senate campaign in November after she had declined several previous Senate bids. Rockefeller, the great-grandson of the

of President Bill Clinton's failed effort to enact near-universal health insurance coverage, then Obama's successful effort nearly two decades later. As a voice on intelligence matters, he initially supported the invasion of Iraq but became a dogged critic of the war effort and what he came to see as the false pretenses and trumped-up intelligence that took the country to war. □



Dairy cows on Steve Niedbalski's farm in Nashville, Ill. Corn crop losses due to drought conditions are weighing heavy on livestock feed in the U.S. (AP Photo/Seth Perlman)

US final report details crop losses to drought

DAVID PITT

Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) —

The federal government released its final crop report for 2012 on Friday, detailing heavy losses caused by the worst drought the U.S. has experienced since the 1950s.

Much of the attention focused on corn, which is widely used as an ingredient in many foods and as feed for livestock. Farmers produced less than three-fourths of the corn the U.S. Department of Agriculture anticipated when planting was done in the spring. The year-end report shows a harvest of 10.78 billion bushels, 27 percent less than the agency's initial estimate of 14.8 billion bushels. (A bushel of corn equals 25.4 kilograms, or 56 pounds). The harvest, however, was still one of the largest in U.S. history. Farmers say better crop technology that improved the ability of corn to withstand drought saved them from more devastating losses, and production was

helped by the large number of acres planted this year.

The USDA closed the year by saying farmers planted 97.2 million acres (39.3 million hectares) of corn, the most since 1937. Farmers have been planting more corn as demand has risen with ethanol production. Just a decade ago, fewer than 80 million acres (32.4 million hectares) were planted in corn.

While the drought eventually spread to cover two-thirds of the nation, its impact varied widely from one region of the corn belt to another. Some Iowa farmers saw decent results, while those in parts of Illinois and Indiana could only watch as plants withered and died after months of drought. The USDA had predicted a record average yield of 166 bushels per acre of corn when warm weather got farmers in the fields early. But the government began scaling back estimates as the drought spread across two-thirds of the nation. □

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FAA to begin a review of Boeing 787 Dreamliners

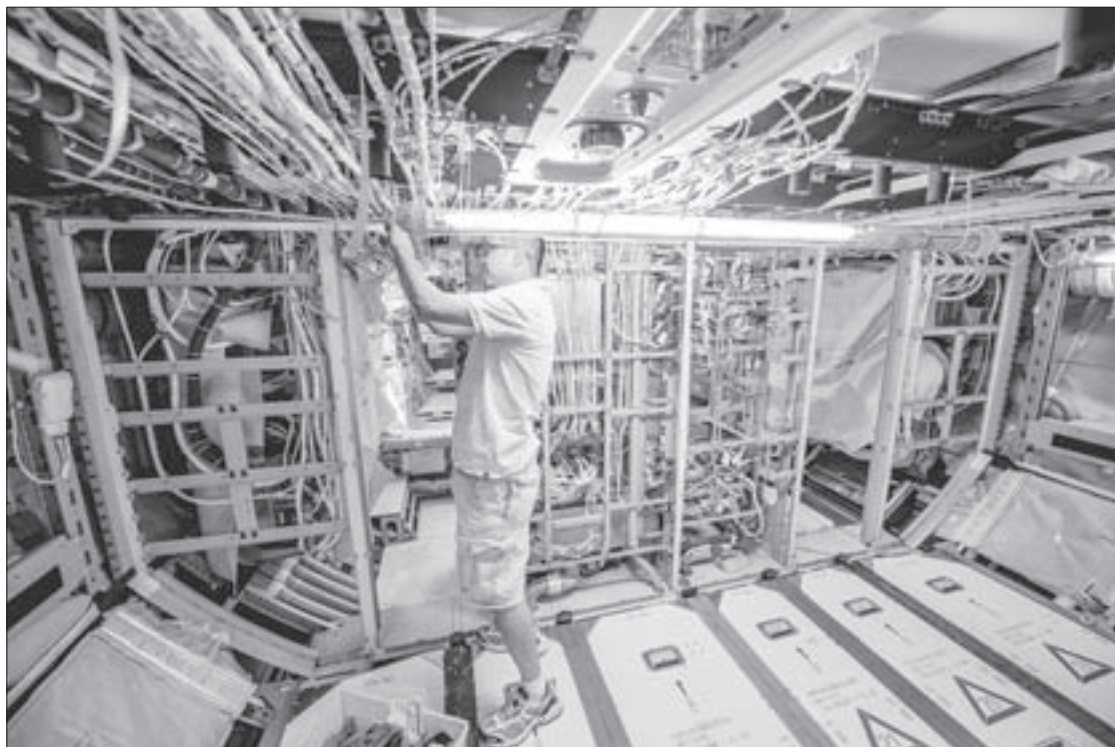
JAD MOUAWAD

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Federal authorities Friday ordered a review of electrical systems in Boeing's new 787 Dreamliner following a spate of incidents, including a battery fire earlier this week in Boston, 15 months after the technologically advanced aircraft came into service.

The Federal Aviation Administration, in an unusual high-priority review, said it would focus on how the 787 was designed, manufactured and assembled. Michael P. Huerta, the FAA's administrator, said the agency would take a special look at the airplane's electrical systems, including batteries and power distribution, and how they interact with each other.

The FAA had spent 200,000 hours reviewing the 787 before certifying it for passenger flights, and of-



A Boeing worker assembles wiring in the lower deck of a 787-8 Dreamliner at a Boeing factory in Everett, Wash., March 7, 2012. (Stuart Isett/The New York Times)

officials have repeatedly expressed confidence in the safety of the airplane. Still, officials said, the incidents of the past week involving electric components were

forcing the review of the certification process, as well as Boeing assembly standards.

"We are concerned about recent events involving the

Boeing 787," Ray LaHood, the transportation secretary, said at a news conference in Washington. "We will look for the root causes of the recent events and

do everything we can to ensure these events don't happen again."

The FAA review will not require the grounding of the 787 fleet, officials said. Boeing has delivered 50 of the airplanes since the first commercial flight in November 2011 and has received orders for more than 800. Eight airlines now fly the 787: All Nippon Airways and Japan Airlines in Japan, Air India, Ethiopian Airlines, Chile's LAN Airlines, Poland's LOT, Qatar Airways and United Airlines. Raymond L. Conner, the head of Boeing's commercial airplane division, repeated at the news conference that the company had complete confidence in the 787. "Every new commercial airplane has issues when it enters service," Conner said. Boeing will work closely with the FAA during the review, he said. □

US sailors request trial in prostitution scandal

LOLITA C. BALDOR

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Two Navy sailors have rejected administrative punishments for allegedly hiring prostitutes in Colombia last year in a scandal that engulfed members of the military and Secret Service, and both asked for trials by court-martial. The sailors were the last to be charged in the embarrassing episode that erupted around the time of a visit by President Barack Obama

to Cartagena.

Of the dozen U.S. military members initially implicated, seven soldiers and two Marines received administrative punishments for what was described as misconduct and one Air Force member was administratively reprimanded for poor judgment. Three of the soldiers declined the administrative punishments and were found guilty in nonjudicial punishment hearings of having relations with a prostitute. □





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Syrian rebels have full control of key air base

BASSEM MROUE
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Syrian rebels and Islamic militants overran a major military air base in the north Friday and, buoyed by the victory, intensified their offensive on two other bases in their most aggressive campaign yet to erode the air supremacy on which the regime of President Bashar Assad has increasingly relied the past year. The rebels control the ground in large parts of the north, but they have been unable to solidify their grip because they - and civilians in rebel-held regions - come under withering strikes from aircraft stationed at a number of military bases in the area. The Taftanaz air base in Idlib province is the larg-

est air base yet to be captured by the rebels. It is the biggest field in the north for helicopters the military uses both for strikes on rebels and for delivering supplies to government troops still in the north to avoid the danger of rebel attacks on the roads. Shortly after they captured the Taftanaz field, rebels in the neighboring province of Aleppo intensified their assault on the Mannagh air base and the international airport of the city of Aleppo, which includes a military base. Rebels have been trying to capture the two sites since last week, along with a third airfield known as Kweires. The latest fighting came as international envoy Lakhdar Brahimi expressed little hope for a political solution for Syria's nearly 2-year-old



A Syrian rebel poses next to a damaged Syrian air force helicopter, at Taftanaz air base that was captured by rebels, in Idlib province, northern Syria, Friday Jan. 11, 2013. Islamic militants seeking to topple President Bashar Assad took full control of a strategic northwestern air base Friday in a significant blow to government forces, seizing helicopters, tanks and multiple rocket launchers, activists said.

(AP Photo/Edlib/ENN)

civil war anytime soon after meeting Friday with senior Russian and U.S. diplomats at the United Nations' European headquarters. Brahimi, who is the joint U.N.-Arab League envoy for Syria, met with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov and U.S. Deputy Secretary of State William Burns. The talks

were part of his attempts to find some traction for an international peace place calling for creation of a new, provisional government in Damascus that has so far gone nowhere. Brahimi spoke with Assad in late December about the plan during a visit to the Syrian capital. Days afterward, Assad went on state

TV with a defiant speech and a plan of his own, offering to oversee a national conciliation conference while rejecting any talks with the armed opposition and vowing to continue fighting them. The speech was widely condemned, though Russia, one of Assad's closest allies, said elements of it should be considered. Russia, along with China, has used its veto at the U.N. Security Council to shield its last Mideast ally from international sanctions.

"We are very, very deeply aware of the immense suffering of the Syrian people, which has gone on for far too long," Brahimi told reporters after his talks in Geneva on Friday. "And we all stressed the need for a speedy end to the bloodshed, to the destruction and all forms of violence in Syria. But if you are asking me whether a solution is around the corner, I'm not sure that is the case," he said. □

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Rebels agree to cease-fire in Central African Republic

SCOTT SAYARE
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Bringing a tentative close to an uprising that brought the Central African Republic to the brink of civil war, the government and rebel fighters seeking to oust the president signed a deal Friday for a weeklong cease-fire that could mature into a peace plan.

Under the agreement, President Francois Bozize will not cede power, but a coalition government will be formed and an opposition leader will be named prime minister, according to participants in the ne-

gotiations, held in nearby Gabon. Those changes will come only after several other rebel demands have been met, including the release of political prisoners taken by the government during the uprising - their number is unclear - and the departure of soldiers from South Africa and Angola who were sent to bolster the tottering government.

The rebels, an alliance of several groups called the Seleka coalition, swept through the north of the country in December toward the capital city,

Bangui. They are still not convinced of Bozize's good will. Should the coalition's conditions not be met within one week, the cease-fire will not be honored, said Col. Francois Florian Njadder-Bedaya, a rebel spokesman.

"He's quite cunning, Bozize," Njadder-Bedaya said. "We want to judge words, speech, with acts." A former military officer, Bozize seized power in 2003 and has since been elected twice, although there are doubts about the legitimacy of his electoral success. □



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Saudi king grants women seats on advisory council

ABDULLAH AL-SHIHRI

Associated Press

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP)

— Saudi Arabia's king granted women seats on the country's top advisory council for the first time on Friday, giving them a long-awaited foothold in the ultraconservative kingdom's male-dominated political system.

King Abdullah's decrees come against the backdrop of heavy restrictions on women, who are not allowed to travel, work, study abroad, marry, get divorced or gain admittance to a public hospital without permission from a male guardian. Recently, airport authorities were instructed to send text messages to the phones of male guardians — husbands, fathers or brothers — with information about the movements

of their wives, daughters or sisters.

"The decision is good but women issues are still hanging," said Wajeha al-Hawidar, a prominent Saudi female activist. "For normal women, there are so many laws and measures that must be suspended or amended for women to be dealt with as grown-ups and adults, without a mandate from guardians."

But she said that having female members of the council could help to change the image of women in society.

"Men can finally respect women when they see them playing a (traditional) male role," she said.

The nation's official news agency said the king issued two royal decrees granting women 30 seats on the Shura Council,



King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz al-Saud of Saudi Arabia waves to members of the Saudi Shura Council in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. King Abdullah granted women seats on the Shura Council, the country's top advisory council, for the first time on Friday, Jan. 11, 2013, giving them a long-awaited foothold in the ultraconservative kingdom's male-dominated political system.

(AP Photo/Hassan Ammar)

which has 150 members plus a president. The council reviews laws and questions ministers, but does not have legislative powers. All members are appointed

by the king and serve four-year terms.

Since 2006, women have been appointed only as advisers to the body.

The king has made incremental steps toward reform but appeared to be treading carefully to avoid angering powerful religious clerics, among them the country's grand mufti who most recently spoke out against the mixing of genders last week. In modern Saudi Arabia, which is the birthplace of Islam and the home of its holiest sites, the governing Al Saud family supports the clerics and the clerics support the family's rule. According to the decrees, the female council members must be "committed to Islamic Shariah disciplines without any violations" and be "restrained by the religious veil." The veil in Saudi Arabia typically refers to a full face covering, also known as a niqab. □

Spanish police arrest two over suspected Iran nuclear export

HAROLD HECKLE

Associated Press

MADRID (AP)

— Spanish police have arrested two people and seized equipment made by a Spanish company that was to be illegally shipped to Iran for use in its nuclear program, officials said Friday.

Police officers stopped a tractor trailer at a highway toll booth in the northern town of Durango on Wednesday and after an inspection arrested the two people and seized the cargo, an Interior Ministry statement said. It said the police "dismantled a ring trafficking material for the development of the Iranian nuclear program."

The seized objects included 44 valves made of an alloy "containing more

than 25 percent nickel and 20 percent chromium by weight, which ... makes them particularly suitable for use in the nuclear industry," the ministry said. It said police also confiscated mounting accessories, export documents to Iran, bank statements and computer information.

The ministry identified the Spanish company as Fluval, which was founded in the 1970s and is located in the northern town of Amurrio. In a statement supplied to The Associated Press, the company denied any wrongdoing. It denied trying to supply parts to Iran in violation of international law and said it manufactures high-technology valves for oil and gas. "The valves cannot be used in

the nuclear industry," Fluval said.

"Fluval denies having committed any criminal act," the statement said, adding that the company "has always conducted its business in compliance with international laws."

The United Nations, European Union and the U.S. have imposed sanctions on Iran over its nuclear program and have gone after people dealing in "dual-use technology," which can have both civilian and military applications. Iran denies any interest in nuclear arms. Tehran says its nuclear program is aimed at energy production, but many Western countries have accused it of being a cover for weapons development. □



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Mali: French forces take action against Islamist Militants

BABA AHMED
SYLVIE CORBET

Associated Press

BAMAKO, Mali (AP) — France launched airstrikes Friday to help the government of Mali defeat al-Qaida-linked militants who captured more ground this week, dramatically raising the stakes in the battle for this vast desert nation. French President Francois Hollande said the “terrorist groups, drug traffickers and extremists” in northern Mali “show a brutality that threatens us all.” He vowed that the operation would last “as long as necessary.”

France said it was taking the action in Mali at the request of President Dioncounda Traore, who declared a state of emergency because of the militants’ advance.

The arrival of the French troops in their former colony came a day after the Islamists moved the closest yet toward territory still under government control and fought the Malian military for the first time in months, seizing the strategic city of Konna.

For the past nine months, the Islamic militants have controlled a large swath of northern Mali, a lawless desert region where kidnapping has flourished.

“French armed forces supported Malian units this afternoon to fight against terrorist elements,” Hollande said in Paris. He did not give any details of the operation, other than to say that it was aimed in part at protecting the 6,000 French citizens in Mali, where seven of them already are being held captive.

French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, when asked whether France had launched airstrikes, said, “To the question of whether there was an air intervention, the response is yes.” He refused to give any other details for security reasons.

France is operating helicopter gunships in Mali, two diplomats told The Associated Press. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the operation publicly. French special forces, who have been operating in the region recently, are also believed to be taking part in the military operation, one diplomat said.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told the AP that Senegal and Nigeria also responded to an appeal from Mali’s president for help to counter the militants.

Residents in central Mali said they had seen Western military personnel arriving in the area, with planes landing at a nearby airport throughout the night.

Col. Abdrahmane Baby, a military operations adviser for the foreign affairs ministry, confirmed in the Malian capital of Bamako that French forces had arrived in the country but gave no details.

“They are here to assist the Malian army,” he told reporters.

Traore went on national television Friday night to declare the state of emergency, saying it would remain in effect for 10 days and could be renewed.

“The situation on the front is over all under control,” he said. Traore called on mining companies and nongovernment organizations to turn their trucks over to Malian military, raising questions about the army’s ability.

State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said the U.S. was “deeply concerned” by events in Mali, and that Washington was closely consulting with Paris. She said neither France nor Mali has asked for U.S. military assistance. France has led a diplomatic push for international action in northern Mali but efforts to get an African-led force together, or to train the weak Malian army, have dragged. The French quickly mobilized after the Islamists seized the city of Konna on Thursday, pushing closer to the army’s major base in central Mali. □

Japan: PM slams China’s island dispute moves

ELAINE KURTENBACH
MALCOLM FOSTER

Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Reaffirming his hawkish stance on China, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Friday that Japan will not negotiate with Beijing over a contested cluster of uninhabited islands and that China was “wrong” for allowing violent protests over the territorial dispute.

Abe, who took office just over two weeks ago, had much warmer words for South Korea, despite strained ties with Seoul over a separate territorial spat and other issues. Abe said he hoped to establish a trusting relationship with President-elect Park Geun-hye as soon as possible.

“Both nations share liberal and democratic values, and have respect for basic human rights and the rule of law,” Abe said.

He spoke as U.S. officials prepared to visit Japan and South Korea to ensure the key American allies are committed to mending their relationship.

Abe, who has declared economic growth to be his top priority, made the comments at a news conference at which he announced more than 20 trillion yen (\$224 billion) in new stimulus to jumpstart Japan’s anemic economy. The aim is to boost growth by 2 percent and create 600,000 jobs, he said. Tensions with China — Japan’s top trading partner — are likely to complicate that task.

A decision by the Japanese government to buy a group of tiny islands in the

East China Sea from their private Japanese owners in September set off protests in China that damaged Japanese-owned factories and stores around the country.

Boycotts of Japanese products in China have hurt Japan’s exporters and added to uncertainties over their extensive investments in mainland China. Toyota and Nissan have

munity, to achieve a political goal by allowing damage to Japanese-affiliated companies and Japanese nationals that have made contributions to Chinese economy,” Abe said. “I want to clearly state that.” Abe warned that such an approach would not only hurt bilateral ties but also negatively affect China’s own economy.

“A relationship based on common strategic interests



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe gestures during a news conference at his official residence in Tokyo, Friday, Jan. 11, 2013.

(AP Photo/Itsuo Inouye)

seen vehicle sales in China drop sharply in recent months.

Asked how he could maintain his staunch stance on the East China Sea islands, called Senkaku in Japanese and Diaoyu in Chinese, while protecting Japan’s substantial business interests in China, Abe blamed Beijing for any deterioration in business ties.

“It was wrong for China, as a country responsible to the international com-

requires mutual respect,” he said, referring to China. “It is that kind of relationship based on common strategic interests that I want to restore.”

China’s Foreign Ministry rejected Abe’s characterization of last year’s violence and the dispute over the islands, saying tensions were solely Japan’s fault. Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said the islands belong to China, and thus over-flights by Chinese airplanes amounted to normal patrols. □

Belfast cops attacked in flag protest

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (AP) — Militant Protestants have attacked Northern Ireland police and blocked roads across Belfast as protests over the city council’s decision to lower the British flag reached their 40th day.

Protesters blocked two dozen Belfast roads at rush hour Friday night. Thousands of workers fled the city early in expectation of what has become nightly disruption since Catholic council members voted Dec. 3 to remove the British flag from

city hall except for 18 official days annually.

Police say four officers were injured amid barrages of 33 petrol bombs and other hand-thrown weapons in two suburbs north of Belfast.

Officers used mobile water cannons and at least five plastic bullets to fend off rioters.

Northern Ireland’s major freeway was closed southwest of Belfast after police discovered a pipe bomb by the roadside.



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In Venezuela, humor not stymied by Chavez's crisis

VIVIAN SEQUERA
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela

(AP) — The monthlong absence of ailing President Hugo Chavez has elicited prayers, an emotional street rally and heated political debate. Amid the tense wait for news from Chavez's hospital in Cuba, Venezuelans are also turning to one of their most prized national attributes: a biting, irreverent sense of humor.

A flurry of jokes and political cartoons have taken aim at the government's postponement of Chavez's inauguration. When the president's followers took to the streets to symbolically take the oath in Chavez's place, some critics said the outlandishness hit a new, surreal high. "What's happening is so absurd that people don't know whether to laugh or cry," said Claudio Nazoa, a Venezuelan comedian. One cartoon by Rayma Suprani in the newspaper El Universal turned its gallows humor to the Supreme Court, which approved putting off Chavez's swearing-in. It showed the court chief with a guillotine slicing up the constitution. The popular satirical website "El Chiguire Bipolar," named after a giant rodent that is common on the plains of Venezuela, took aim at the government's slogan "We're all

Chavez," with a particularly caustic spoof article.

The site alluded to Venezuela's high murder rate, saying in the headline: "21,000 Chavezes who died at the hands of criminals can't attend the inauguration."

"Jokes play a role of social catharsis, and that's why there is acid wit and irony," said Tulio Hernandez, a sociology professor at Central University of Venezuela. "It's a way of letting off steam." Dark humor about Chavez's condition and Venezuela's unsettled situation has popped up in various parts of Latin America. Brazilian humorist Jose Simao has made jokes on Twitter and a newspaper column. "I think Chavez isn't on the island of Cuba. He's on the island of Lost," Simao said on Twitter, referring to the popular television series. While political cartoons in some other countries toyed with the concept of Chavez possibly being at death's door, in Venezuela the cartoonists mainly seemed to steer clear of Chavez's condition. Cartoonist Roberto Weil instead focused a recent cartoon on what critics call a blatant violation of the constitution, depicting a hyena tearing up the charter in its teeth.

Nazoa said in a telephone interview that he found the alternative street inauguration for Chavez especially bizarre. □

Maduro off to Cuba to see Chavez

FABIOLA SANCHEZ
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela

(AP) — Venezuela's vice president was heading to Cuba on Friday to visit the ailing Hugo Chavez and his family, while the leaders of Argentina and Peru also traveled to Havana saying they hoped to ask about the Venezuelan president's condition.

Venezuela's government says the 58-year-old president is fighting a severe respiratory infection a month after he underwent cancer surgery in Havana. "I'm leaving for Havana to continue that work of visiting the family, meeting with his medical team, visiting our commander president," Vice President Nicolas Maduro said on television in Caracas. Chavez hasn't spoken publicly or been seen since before his Dec. 11 operation, his fourth cancer-related surgery since June 2011 for an undisclosed type of pelvic cancer. The government revealed this week that Chavez is receiving treatment for "respiratory deficiency." Medical experts say that might mean he is breathing with the help of a ventilator.

Maduro was making his second trip to Cuba since

ceiving treatment for "respiratory deficiency." Medical experts say that might mean he is breathing with the help of a ventilator.

Maduro was making his second trip to Cuba since



Venezuela's VP Nicolas Maduro speaks in Caracas, Venezuela, Friday, Jan. 11, 2013. (AP Photo)

Chavez's surgery. He said he would meet with Argentine President Cristina Fernandez, who also was visiting Havana, and hoped to meet with Peruvian President Ollanta Humala, who arrived Friday in the Cuban capital.

Fernandez arrived at the Hotel Nacional along Havana's waterfront on Friday morning. Authorities have characterized the Argentine leader's trip as a private visit and her foreign minister said Thursday that she intended to meet with Chavez.

She told The Associated Press in Friday afternoon that she would lunch with Cuban President Raul Castro and his retired brother Fidel.

"And then surely I will meet with the family of my companion and dear friend Hugo Chavez," Fernandez said.

Arriving at the Havana airport, Humala did not say if had confirmed plans to meet with Chavez.

"Obviously I will ask, I will see, how is President Chavez's situation," Humala told reporters, saying he wishes Chavez a "quick recovery."

Presidents Rafael Correa of Ecuador and Evo Morales of Bolivia have also visited Havana during Chavez's current stay there. □

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Cubans excited to explore new laws easing travel

**A. RODRIGUEZ
PETER ORSI**

Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — Like many Cubans, 16-year-old Ana Liliam Garcia is excited at the thought of seeing the world beyond this Communist-run island smaller than the state of Pennsylvania. Once an impossibility, today she dreams of meeting several relatives in Florida — and maybe even Mickey Mouse.

"My cousins and my uncles, they're all in Miami," Garcia said, her eyes lighting up as she talked about a new law taking effect Monday that will let most islanders travel abroad without seeking government permission or paying for costly exit visas. "I would like to see Disneyland in the United States. I'll be able to travel!"

The overhaul of Cuba's decades-old migratory law, announced three months ago, eliminates the much-detested exit visa known as the "white card" and is perhaps the most highly anticipated of a series of reforms initiated under President Raul Castro.

Observers predict it will result in only a modest initial increase in trips by Cubans, who must still get entry visas to travel to most countries, including the United States. And critics note that the law includes a "national security" clause that could be used to bar exits by government opponents, skilled

workers and those privy to sensitive information.

But if applied evenhandedly, the opening would eliminate one of the biggest human rights criticisms leveled against a country that has long controlled who can leave, leading opponents to call Cuba an island prison.

way it used to in people's regular lives."

The new law has a number of concrete provisions that will benefit many Cubans. For Garcia, it means a first chance to travel since under the previous rules most minors could only leave Cuba if they planned to do so permanently.

invitation from someone in their country of destination. In the past nearly all exit visa applications were granted, and relatively quickly, but the costs were prohibitive to many in this country where wages average \$20 a month. Between various application and notarization fees, it ran to \$300

may be more open to travel in sensitive cases.

This week word emerged of a Health Ministry directive saying doctors are to be treated like all other citizens in their travel requests. The news came as a surprise because health care workers are among those closely guarded to prevent "brain drain" of skilled workers trained at great cost under Cuba's socialist system. It was widely presumed that doctors would fall under the "national security" clause.

That should make life easier for people like Pedro Salazar, a 45-year-old industrial designer. He and his wife, Noelis Rodriguez, have been granted U.S. family-reunification immigrant visas, but have been waiting for Rodriguez, an epidemiologist, to be cleared to leave. "I'm a professional. What does it matter if I live here or elsewhere?" Salazar said on a recent day outside a migration office. "They educate professionals for free, yes, it's true. But then I spent two years doing social service."

Analysts say islanders will likely not be flocking en masse to the Grand Canyon or the French Riviera anytime soon.

Securing entry visas to Europe or the United States can be difficult for citizens of any developing nation. And low salaries mean millions of Cubans will be priced out.

But experts say more and more islanders will be able to see the outside world, something likely to fuel a demand for more change. "The new migratory policy is an incentive for (further) reform in politics and the economy," said Arturo Lopez-Levy, a Cuban-born economist at the University of Denver. □



People wait to enter the U.S. Interests Section to apply for U.S. visas in Havana, Cuba. People are awaiting a new law taking effect Monday, Jan. 14, 2013 that will let the vast majority of Cubans travel abroad without having to ask for permission first or pay for costly exit visas.

(AP Photo/Franklin Reyes)

"What's important about it is people see this as a symbolic step of some importance more than a substantive one," said Geoff Thale, a Cuba analyst at the Washington Office on Latin America think tank. "It symbolizes the end of the state intruding in the same

As a dual Spanish citizen, something she and tens of thousands of other Cubans have attained through Spanish ancestry, the teen qualifies to visit Florida without having to worry about a U.S. visa.

Relatives there will help out with airfare and other costs her parents can't afford.

"My aunts and uncles are overjoyed," Garcia said. "In my dreams, I want to see the whole world ... but I always would want to return to where my family and friends are."

The measure greatly simplifies travel by scrapping the exit visa, and doing away with the requirement that Cubans provide a letter of

or more a trip, and some Cubans paid an additional \$200 to \$300 to people overseas for invitation letters. Now, islanders need only make a one-time \$100 application for a passport, renewable for \$20 every two years.

But dissidents are skeptical their situation will change.

"I think the migratory law is a way of creating the illusion of an opening in the eyes of the international community so Cuba is not criticized so much," said Guillermo Farinas, another Sakharov winner who was turned down for an exit visa in 2006, 2007 and 2010.

There are at least some indications that authorities

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chillin' with their Chill-think flip flops, sunglasses, hats, tank tops, shorts, t-shirts and more. And if that was something, Brouwerij Nacional Balashi will choose the new face of Chill during this event. Mostly seen on TV and in magazine advertising with professional models the company has decided to change directions and pick another the new face of Aruba's most popular beer. And of course, don't forget to come in flip flops, because the idea is to have a good time and spend the day by the sea, with the beer of the moment, and just CHILL!☐

At the Divi Tamarijn Beach Resort:

Loyal visitors Edmund and Dolores Hesar honored by ATA!



EAGLE BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very nice couple who are loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba, at the Divi Tamarijn Beach Resort, as Ambassadors of Goodwill. The symbolic honorary title is presented

in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 20-or-more consecutive years. The honorees were Edmund and Dolores Hesar. Edmund and Dolores are loyal guests of the Divi Tamarijn Beach Resort,

and they love Aruba very much, because of the extremely friendly people, the climate, the beaches, the restaurants, and because

Aruba is paradise for them! The certificate was presented by Ernest Giel, representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, together with

Bradley and Carolina from the activities department of the Divi Tamarijn Beach Resort. Congratulations! □

United Airlines launches baggage delivery service

CHICAGO - United Airlines today launched a new baggage delivery option, enabling customers to have their checked bags delivered directly to their final destinations – within 100 miles of their arrival airports – and skip baggage claim upon arrival. Baggage delivery by BagsVIP will initially be available to customers departing from any domestic airport and arriving in Boston, Chicago, Honolulu, Houston, Los Angeles and Orlando. The airline plans to expand the service to more than 190 domestic airports in the coming months.

"United's new baggage delivery service offers an alternative for travelers who prefer the convenience of having their checked bags delivered directly to their homes, offices or hotels," said Tom O'Toole, United's senior vice president of marketing and loyalty. "Our customers have told us this type of option adds value to their travel experience."

Standard rates for bag delivery within a 40-mile radius are as follows:

1 bag	\$29.95
2 bags	\$39.95
3-8 bags	\$49.95

Delivery is available up to a 100-mile radius for an additional charge that varies by distance. Delivery pricing is in addition to any standard checked-bag charges that might otherwise apply.

Customers can order the service directly from BagsVIP online, or by calling 1-877-847-0045. □

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Haiti plans 'subdued' memorial 3 years after quake

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— The Haitian government plans a low-key ceremony marking the third anniversary of the earthquake that devastated the country and killed hundreds of thousands of people.

President Michel Martelly on Saturday will preside over a "subdued" memorial on the grounds of the former National Palace, which was destroyed in the disaster and later demolished, said presidential adviser Damian Merlo. Senior government officials are expected to attend.

"It's something we need to remember but not always be reminded of," Merlo said of the Jan. 12, 2010 earthquake.

The U.N. also plans a small private memorial to mark the anniversary. Last year, the United Nations held a service to remember its 102 employees who died — the biggest loss of life of U.N. personnel in a single

disaster. Haiti's government says the quake killed about 316,000 people. Another 1.5 million people landed in impromptu settlements

around the capital and other cities in the south. People have moved out of the more visible camps in public plazas but there are

still more than 350,000 people living in the camps, according to the International Organization of Migration, a humanitarian group that

helps people displaced by disaster and conflict.

The reconstruction effort has been slow to take hold because of political paralysis, the level of devastation and a trickle of aid. Only slightly more than half of the \$5.3 billion pledged by donors has been released, according to the U.N. Office of the Special Envoy for Haiti.

The government said that this year Jan. 12 will not be a holiday marking the earthquake as in the last two years.

But it said in a statement it has asked that the Haitian flag be flown at half-mast and that nightclubs be closed.

Officials last year noted the occasion with back-to-back news conferences and meetings with former U.S. president and U.N. special envoy Bill Clinton in attendance and foreign aid groups touting their accomplishments. □



Residents of the Jean-Marie Vincent camp for people displaced by the 2010 earthquake, wait for customers outside their tent where they have set up a stand to sell rice, oil and canned goods, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2013. Saturday marks the third anniversary of the devastating 7.0 magnitude earthquake that destroyed an estimated 100,000 homes across the capital and southern Haiti, including some of the country's most iconic structures. There are nearly 360,000 people still living in the encampments that sprouted throughout the city after the earthquake.

(AP Photo/Dieu Nalio Chery)

SUPER



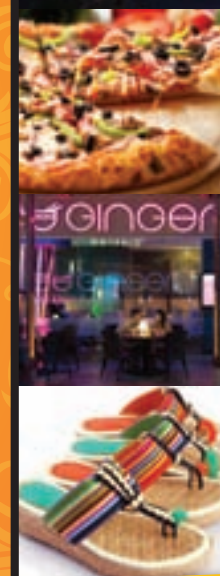
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Australian Open tennis championship defending and men's singles champion Novak Djokovic of Serbia places his trophy on a stand at the official draw for the 2013 event in Melbourne, Australia, Friday, Jan. 11, 2013.

Associated Press

Andy Murray approaching Australian Open from new angle

JOHN PYE
AP Sports Writer
MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)

— The novelty of being the first British man to win a Grand Slam title in 76 years is about to give way to the reality of being a reigning major winner.

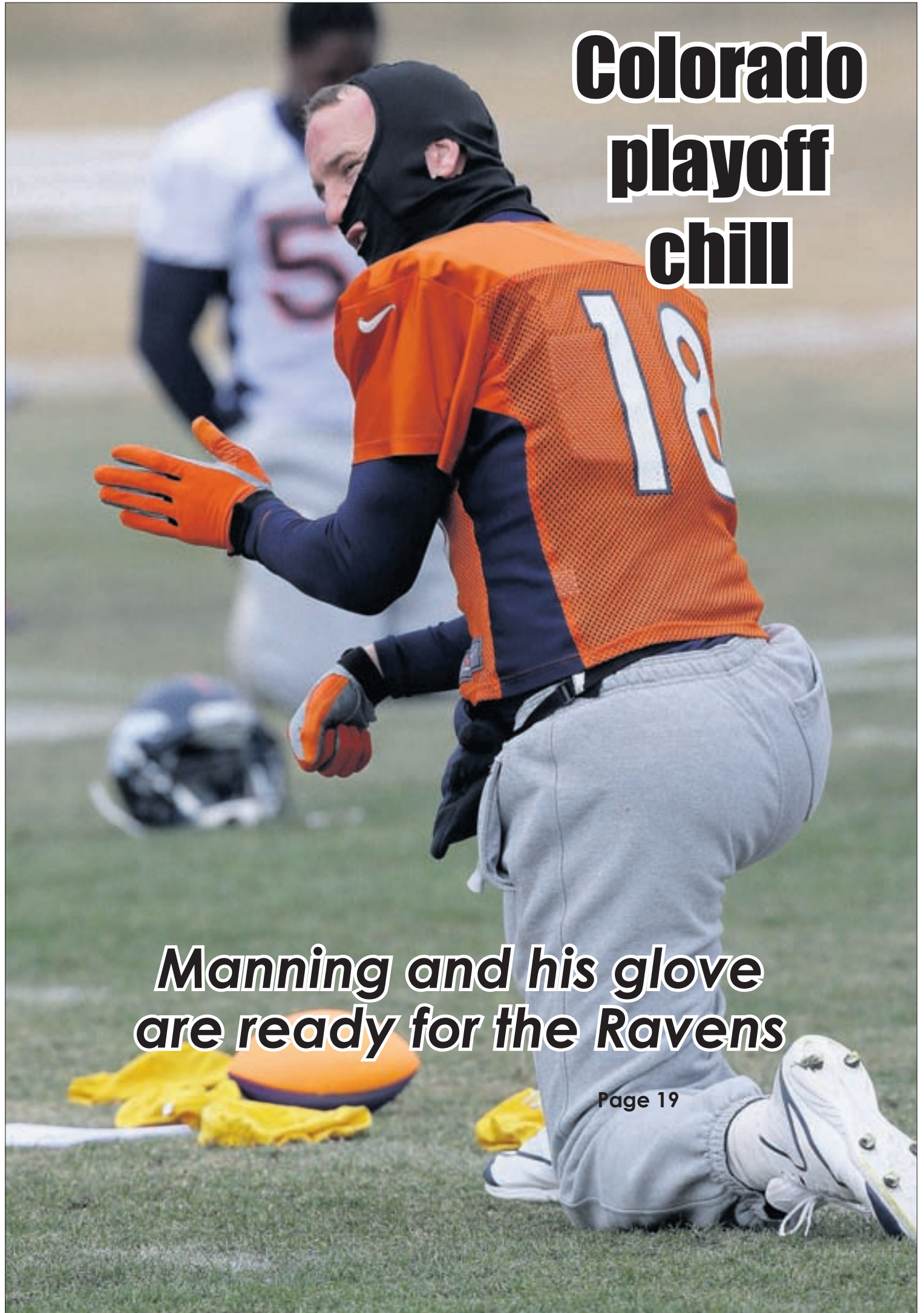
It's just another reason Andy Murray has found to keep Ivan Lendl in his corner.

Murray's career-changing win at the U.S. Open in September came shortly after his breakthrough win at the London Olympics, where he avenged a painful defeat on the same court to Roger Federer at Wimbledon.

The 25-year-old Scot said it was the most intense three months of his life. He's had time to celebrate the win and dwell on its significance, and now he is days away from his first Grand Slam event since, and at a venue where he has twice lost in the final.

Continued on Page 20

Colorado playoff chill



Manning and his glove are ready for the Ravens

Page 19

NBA Capsules

Blazers come from behind to beat Heat 92-90

Associated Press

PORTLAND, Oregon (AP) —

Wesley Matthews made a 3-pointer to put Portland in front with 26.9 seconds left and the Trail Blazers hung on to beat the Miami Heat 92-90 Thursday night for their fourth straight win and ninth straight at the Rose Garden. The Blazers held LeBron James to 15 points, snapping his 54-game streak with at least 20 points that dated back to last season.

Miami led by as many as 13 points but lost for the fifth time in eight games.

Nicolas Batum led the Blazers with 28 points, and LaMarcus Aldridge had 20 points and 15 rebounds. Matthews finished with 18 points. Chris Bosh had 29 points for the Eastern Conference-leading Heat.

PACERS 81, KNICKS 76

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Paul George scored seven



Portland Trail Blazers forward Nicolas Batum, left, from France, works the ball against Miami Heat forward LeBron James during the first quarter of an NBA basketball game in Portland, Ore., Thursday, Jan. 10, 2013.

points in a 13-0 fourth-quarter run and finished with 24, leading Indiana past short-handed New York.

The Pacers have won 12 of 15, including a sweep of the other two Eastern Conference division leaders —

Miami and the Knicks — this week.

New York was led by J.R. Smith with 25 points on a night they clearly missed Carmelo Anthony, who was suspended for Monday's postgame confron-

tation with Boston's Kevin Garnett. Without Anthony, the Knicks fell nine points below their previous season-low point total (85).

New York rallied from a 49-38 third-quarter deficit and started the fourth with a 60-

58 lead.

MAVERICKS 117, KINGS 112, OT

SACRAMENTO, California (AP) — O.J. Mayo had 24 points and 10 rebounds, Vince Carter scored 23 points off the bench and Dallas rallied from 17 points down to beat Sacramento in overtime.

Shawn Marion added 19 points and 10 rebounds to help the Mavericks snap a four-game losing streak. Dallas, which had lost 10 of 11, finished its short road trip 1-2. With the franchise's possible sale and relocation to Seattle on the minds of Kings fans, DeMarcus Cousins had 29 points and nine rebounds before getting ejected in overtime for elbowing Carter in the face. Tyreke Evans scored 20 points and Isaiah Thomas had 18 points for the Kings, who lost their third straight game. □

Associated Press

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Manning goes with glove as weather gets frightful

EDDIE PELLIS

AP National Writer

ENGLEWOOD, Colorado

(AP) — There's a new "Gloved One" — in Denver, at least.

Ripping a page from Michael Jackson's playbook, quarterback Peyton Manning has practiced for and played in the Denver Broncos' last two games with a sticky-feeling, orange-and-grey glove on his throwing hand. Sure, Manning has earned his fair share of curious glances for donning cold-weather gear when the temperatures are in the mild 50s (low teens C), as they were on Tuesday at practice.

But in getting ready for the playoff push, which could include two games in sometimes-snowy Denver, Manning is leaving no stone unturned. And, as if on cue, a strong arctic storm is expected to roll into Denver on Friday, bringing snow and bitter cold. The high for Saturday's playoff game against Baltimore is forecast to be 20 degrees (minus 7 C).

Manning, who won his only Super Bowl playing barehanded in a rainstorm in Miami in 2007, said he hasn't given much thought to whether the glove would help him more in cold or wet conditions, each of which can make the ball harder, more slick and more difficult to grip. "I really have not thought about it that analytically, if that's the word," Manning said. "It's a glove."

Of course, if Peyton Manning is wearing it, it's more than a glove — it's a topic of conversation.

A creature of habit who hasn't worn anything on his hands before this season, Manning conceded the glove is a concession to the altered feel of his grip, especially in cold weather, after the multiple neck surgeries he underwent during his season out of the NFL. "I certainly don't think I would have had to wear the glove had I not been injured last year," he said. "It's part of my injury, some things that I've had to adjust. I'm in a different body,

some things are different for me, so that's the reason for that as much as anything."

Manning could certainly use any edge he can get in cold weather.

He has lost all three playoff games, outdoors, in which

Denver Broncos quarterback Peyton Manning (18) runs through drills during the NFL football team's practice Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2013, in Englewood, Colo. The Broncos play the Baltimore Ravens at home on Saturday in a playoff game.

Associated Press

the temperature at kick-off is less than 40 degrees (5 C), the last of them eight years ago. His former team, Indianapolis, played in a dome.

But he's had more than his share of cold-weather success in the regular season, going 7-5 with five 300-yard games. That includes Denver's regular-season finale against Kansas City on Dec. 30, the second game in which he tested out the glove, and the first NFL home game he's ever played with the temperature under 40 (5 C).

"For wearing it for the first time in my entire football career, I guess you could say it's been OK the past two weeks," Manning said after that game.

More than OK. Manning's completion percentage was 5.8 points higher, against admittedly less-than-stellar opposition. Some observers, quick in the past to point out that Manning's passes have often flown with a bit of a wobble, have noticed less of that since he donned the glove.

"I love the glove, love the glove," tight end Jacob Tamme said. "There's no difference. Other than seeing it, I would never know that he's got it on. So, whatever works."

Which is sort of coach John Fox's attitude, as well.

"If it gets cold out, you wear gloves," Fox said. "I don't think it's a big factor. I think it's a lot about nothing." □



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Australian Open

Continued from Page 17

"Obviously, the last few years I got close but never managed to get over the final hurdle," he said of his four previous failures in Grand Slam finals. "So whether it was a mental thing, whether it was things in my game I needed to improve, physical things, who knows exactly?" "But now that I've managed to do it, I hope that when I'm in those situations again I'll deal with them better and put less pressure on myself, which obviously will help me play better." Murray's biggest obstacles to a second Grand Slam remain top-ranked Novak Djokovic, who is aiming for a third consecutive Australian Open title, and No. 2-ranked Federer, who has won four Aus-

tralian titles among his 17 majors. Murray landed in the same half of the draw as Federer, meaning they could potentially meet in the semifinals. Djokovic is in the other half and has the more favorable run to the final. In the absence of the injured Rafael Nadal, another Spaniard, David Ferrer, moves up to the No. 4 seeding. Ferrer has never reached a major final and would likely have to beat Djokovic, if results go according to the seedings, in the semifinals to reach that career milestone. Serena Williams has won five Australian Open titles, more than any woman in the Open era, and with a run of 35 victories in her last 36 matches, is the top contender again in Mel-



Australian Open tennis championship defending women's singles champion Victoria Azarenka of Belarus, right, and men's singles defending champion Novak Djokovic of Serbia place their trophies on a stand at the official draw for the 2013 event in Melbourne, Australia, Friday, Jan. 11, 2013.

Associated Press

Thank You!



Meet
Mayra Zievinger,
a member of the
Bucuti & Tara Beach
Resorts family since
the resort opened its
door 25 years ago.

Mayra says that the best part of her job in the housekeeping department is the family feeling she has developed amongst her co-workers, over the past 25 years. Mayra takes pride in being a productive member of the team and enjoys seeing repeat guests return year after year. Her advice to anyone who wishes to stay in a position within a company for a long time is, "If you love what you do, you will do it well."

Mayra is one of many associates at Bucuti & Tara Beach Resorts that make the boutique resort a special experience for its guests, and we wish to say thank you to Mayra.




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bourne. Her run includes the titles at Wimbledon, the London Olympics, the U.S. Open, the WTA Championship and the Brisbane International last week. Top-ranked Victoria Azarenka hasn't added to her Grand Slam collection since winning at Melbourne Park last year, when she beat Maria Sharapova in the final. And she'll likely have to beat Williams to reach the final after both were drawn in the same half. In recent seasons, Murray has arrived in Australia at the start of the season to answer questions about that long British drought that dated to Fred Perry's last major win in 1936. Not anymore. Since Lendl first joined him as coach this time last year, the pair have worked together to hone his game. Lendl lost his first four Grand Slam finals, as well, before going on to win eight majors. So Murray is confident that Lendl's guidance will continue to serve him well. "Having someone like Ivan around me — he went through a similar sort of thing — so that's obviously helped as well," Murray said. "He's given me some advice on how to deal with certain things that come with winning big events." Murray said it was hard to describe in a few words

the difference that Lendl has made to his game. "We've worked on some minor technical things, some mental things, and we've obviously worked on tactical things as well," he said. "But he tries to keep things fairly simple and not overcomplicate things. That's something that I think especially at the beginning of my career I struggled with." Federer thinks Djokovic is the favorite at Melbourne Park, where he has won the last two titles. "He's probably been the best hard-court player over the last couple of years, even though Murray won the U.S. Open," he said. "Andy Murray is playing great and only going to get stronger in the next couple of years." Djokovic lost to Australia's Bernard Tomic at the Hopman Cup last week, but will be taking the Australian Open a lot more seriously. "It's a huge challenge," he said. "I love the Australian Open. That court brings back the best memories of my career. "I like the hard court, I like the conditions and I'm going to go for the trophy, of course. I have high ambitions for myself, but I'm absolutely aware that it's going to be very difficult because today's Grand Slam is very competitive. □



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Luongo ready for Canucks camp, awaits trade

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Roberto Luongo is still open to a trade no matter how long it takes the Vancouver Canucks to deal him.

The star goalie returned to the ice for an informal workout with his Canucks teammates on Friday while facing an uncertain future. Luongo was displaced as Vancouver's No. 1 net-minder by Cory Schneider in last year's playoffs. After the season, Luongo said he would waive his no-trade clause if asked, but general manager Mike Gillis couldn't swing a deal before the 113-day NHL lockout began in September.

"I told (Gillis) I was ready to go as long as it took," Luongo said. "Whether it's a couple days, next week, two weeks, at the end of the season, it's totally fine with me."

Luongo has long been rumored to be headed to the Toronto Maple Leafs. Trades are prohibited un-



Vancouver Canucks goalie Roberto Luongo walks past a group of children from a daycare who came to watch the team's informal hockey practice at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, British Columbia, on Friday, Jan. 11, 2013.

Associated Press

til players have ratified the proposed new collective bargaining agreement, which is expected to happen on Saturday. Training camps would then likely open on Sunday.

Luongo will be there for camp, although he expected to be gone from Vancouver by now.

"If you asked in May last year, I would have said no," he said.

As the lockout dragged on, Luongo thought there was a chance he would return to the team. He said in September at a Canucks charity golf tournament he would be at camp, if necessary.

The 33-year-old Luongo, acquired from the Florida Panthers after the previous lockout forced the cancellation of the entire 2004-05 season, isn't worried about his future.

He admitted that his current plight would have stressed him out if he was still in his 20s.

"I've matured in the sense where I can handle adversity (better) than I did back then," Luongo said. "That's why I've been really calm about the whole situation. I've been able to enjoy it, even though it's not an easy situation. The fact that I'm so comfortable here will make it much easier."

His pending departure is also much different than the unexpected trade from the Panthers.

"The whole thing was a

different circumstance," Luongo said. "I was just shocked by the whole thing."

But despite being prepared for a trade out of Vancouver, it will still be difficult to leave the Canucks. Many of his teammates were with the team when he arrived, and he has forged close friendships. Luongo's teammates were happy to be back on the ice with him. They said the trade speculation surrounding him won't be a distraction.

Luongo (\$5.3 million) and Schneider (\$4 million) count for a total of \$9.3 million on Vancouver's salary cap. With the cap slated to be reduced to \$64.3 million next season from a pro-rated \$70.2 million this season, there is more urgency to trade Luongo for financial reasons.

But coach Alain Vigneault refused to say who will be the starting goalie when the season opens.

"(Luongo's) one of my two goaltenders," Vigneault said. "We've always made the decisions in the best interest of the team. We've got two great goaltenders, two great people that are great teammates, and both want to play."

Vigneault also isn't concerned that Luongo's unsettled position will affect the rest of the team.

"You have seen him throughout the last couple of months," he said. "He's a class individual. He's a smart and bright young man."

"He always puts the team ahead of himself, and he's a Vancouver Canuck player, and I'm not going to speculate on what's going on outside of that. Right now he's one of my two goaltenders, and I'm very fortunate to have him." □

AP source: Browns hire Rob Chudzinski as new coach

TOM WITHERS
AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — A person familiar with the decision says the Cleveland Browns have hired Carolina offensive coordinator Rob Chudzinski as their new coach.

Chudzinski will become the Browns' sixth full-time coach since 1999, said the person who spoke to The Associated Press on Thursday on the condition of anonymity because the team has not yet announced the hiring. The 44-year-old Chudzinski has spent the past two seasons with the Panthers. He has had two previous stints with the Browns as an assistant coach.

Chudzinski interviewed with the team on Wednesday. He has spent the past two years working with quarterback Cam Newton.

The Browns have been searching for a



Rob Chudzinski answers questions at a news conference introducing him as the new head coach of the Cleveland Browns at the NFL football team's practice facility in Berea, Ohio Friday, Jan. 11, 2013.

Associated Press

coach since firing Pat Shurmur on Dec. 31 after a 5-11 season. □

Flu season has businesses congested

M. PERRONE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Nearly half the 70 employees at a Ford dealership in Clarksville, Ind., have been out sick at some point in the past month. It didn't have to be that way, the boss says.

"If people had stayed home in the first place, a lot of times that spread wouldn't have happened," says Marty Book, a vice

its full-time staff because of the flu and other ailments.

"The people here are working longer hours and it puts a lot of strain on everyone," Fleetwood says. "You don't know whether to ask people with the flu to come in or not." He says the flu is also taking its toll on business as customers cancel their travel plans: "People are getting the flu and they're reduced to a shriveling little mess and don't

tirement home in Ames, Iowa, says the company took that step this year for its 120 employees, providing the shots at no cost. It is also supplying face masks for all staff.

And no one is expected to come into work if sick, she says.

So far, the company hasn't seen an outbreak of flu cases.

"You keep your fingers crossed and hope it con-



Stephanie Dugger, 20, of Apache Junction, gets a flu shot from nurse Bhagwati Bhakta at Mollen Immunization Clinics in Scottsdale, Ariz.

(AP Photo/Cheryl Evans)

president at Carriage Ford. "But people really want to get out and do their jobs, and sometimes that's a detriment."

The flu season that has struck early and hard across the U.S. is putting businesses and employees alike in a bind. In this shaky economy, many Americans are reluctant to call in sick, something that can backfire for their employers. Flu was widespread in 47 states last week, up from 41 the week before, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Friday. The only states without widespread flu were California, Mississippi and Hawaii. And the main strain of the virus circulating tends to make people sicker than usual.

Blake Fleetwood, president of Cook Travel in New York, says his agency is operating with less than 40 percent of

feel like going anywhere." Many workers go to the office even when they're sick because they are worried about losing their jobs, says John Challenger, CEO of Challenger, Gray & Christman, an employer consulting firm. Other employees report for work out of financial necessity, since roughly 40 percent of U.S. workers don't get paid if they are out sick. Some simply have a strong work ethic and feel obligated to show up. Flu season typically costs employers \$10.4 billion for hospitalization and doctor's office visits, according to the CDC. That does not include the costs of lost productivity from absences.

At Carriage Ford, Book says the company plans to make flu shots mandatory for all employees.

Linda Doyle, CEO of the Northcrest Community re-

tinues this way," Doyle says. "You see the news and it's frightening. We just want to make sure that we're doing everything possible to keep everyone healthy. Cleanliness is really the key to it. Washing your hands. Wash, wash, wash."

Among other steps employers can take to reduce the spread of the flu on the job: holding meetings via conference calls, staggering shifts so that fewer people are on the job at the same time, and avoiding handshaking.

Newspaper editor Rob Blackwell says he had taken only two sick days in the last two years before coming down with the flu and then pneumonia in the past two weeks. He missed several days the first week of January and has been working from home the past week. □

Merck warns doctors to stop prescribing drug Tredaptive

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON - Drugmaker Merck says it is suspending its sale of the cholesterol drug Tredaptive and is telling doctors to quit prescribing the medicine.

Tredaptive is available in about 70 countries, including Europe. The drug is not approved in the United States.

Merck last month said initial results from a late-stage study showed that adding Tredaptive to traditional statin therapy did not lower the risk of heart attack, stroke and related problems.

Results also showed that patients taking the cholesterol combination pill were more likely to suffer some serious, non-fatal adverse events.

Merck says it made its decision based in part on a European Medicine Agency committee recommendation. Merck has advised patients to quit taking the drug only after talking to a physician. □

NYC to restrict prescription drugs in public hospital ERs

A. HARTOCOLLIS

© 2013 New York Times

NEW YORK — Some of the most common and most powerful prescription painkillers on the market will be restricted sharply in the emergency rooms at New York City's 11 public hospitals, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said Thursday in an effort to crack down on what he called a citywide and national epidemic of prescription drug abuse.

Under the new city policy, most public hospital patients will no longer be able to get more than three days' worth of narcotic painkillers like Vicodin and Percoset. Long-acting painkillers, including OxyContin, a familiar remedy for chronic backache and arthritis, as well as Fentanyl patches and methadone, will not be dispensed at all. And lost, stolen or destroyed prescriptions will not be refilled.

City officials said the policy was aimed at reducing the growing dependency on painkillers and preventing excess amounts of drugs from being taken out of medicine chests and sold on the street or abused by teenagers and others who want to get high.

"Abuse of prescription painkillers in our city has increased alarmingly," Bloomberg said in announcing the new policy at Elmhurst Hospital Center, a public hospital in Queens. More than 250,000 New Yorkers over age 12 are abusing them, he said, leading to rising hospital admissions for overdoses and deaths, Medicare fraud by doctors who write false prescriptions and violent crime like "holdups at neighborhood pharmacies."

But some critics said that poor and uninsured patients, including cancer patients, sometimes used the emergency room as their primary source of medical care. The restrictions, they said, could deprive doctors in the public hospital system — whose mission it is to treat poor people — of the flexibility that they need to respond to patients.

"Here is my problem with legislative medicine," said Dr. Alex Rosenau, president-elect of the American College of Emergency Physicians and senior vice chairman of emergency medicine at Lehigh Valley Health Network in Eastern Pennsylvania. "It prevents me from being a professional and using my judgment."

While someone could fake a toothache to get painkillers, he said, another patient might have legitimate pain and not be able to get an appointment at a dental clinic for days or weeks. Or, he said, a patient with a hand injury may need more than three days of pain relief until the swelling goes down and an operation could be scheduled. □

EU police agency opens unit to tackle cybercrime

MIKE CORDER

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) —

The European Union's police coordination agency opened a new cybercrime unit Friday to combat online offenses from banking fraud to peddling images of child sex abuse.

But as the European Cybercrime Centre, or EC3, formally opened its doors at Europol's Hague headquarters, European Home Affairs Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom conceded it will be playing catch-up with organized crime gangs reveling in a "Golden Age" of cybercrime.

Online criminals, she said,

"are ahead of us when it comes to imagination and cooperation."

Europol is fighting back with experts huddled around computer screens in blue-lit "labs," monitoring internet traffic and able to retrieve data users believe they have deleted from their cell phone or computer hard disks.

The agency says online payment card fraud generates an estimated €1.5 billion (\$2 billion) a year, while recent international investigations into pedophiles trafficking child abuse images on the Internet have led to hundreds of arrests worldwide.

Europol expert Valerio Pa-



European Commissioner for Home Affairs Cecilia Malmstrom, left, and the head of the European Cybercrime Center Troels Oerling, right, participate in a press conference at EU headquarters in Brussels on Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2013.

pajorgji said the new center will chase criminals who

attempt to conceal their activities in parts of the In-

ternet and online networks not generally accessed by regular users or search engines — known as the "deep web" and "dark-net."

It also will track and tackle malicious software used to steal personal and banking information from people's computers and empty their online accounts.

Europol Director Rob Wainwright called the establishment of the center a milestone in Europe's fight against crime and efforts to deny criminals "the cyberspace and opportunity they are currently exploiting to harm governments, businesses and citizens."

The European center aims to cooperate with other such agencies around the world, and Wainwright signed a letter of intent on cooperation with John Morton, director of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency, which has a long-established cybercrime unit known as C3.

Morton said cross-border teamwork is key to tackling cybercrime, which knows no borders. "This level of international cooperation is not just an ideal or something to be wished for but rather a necessity," he said at the opening ceremony in The Hague.

"You literally cannot investigate and prosecute these cases any more — the large-scale ones — over the Internet without very strong international cooperation." □

Apple CEO: China will be biggest market

JOE McDONALD

AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Apple expects China to overtake the United States as its biggest market, CEO Tim Cook told a Chinese government news agency.

"China is currently our second largest market. I believe it will become our first. I believe strongly that it will," the Xinhua News Agency quoted Cook as saying in an interview.

The report gave no details of when Cook thought China might pass the United States. Apple Inc. spokespeople in China did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Apple has said sales in China more than doubled in 2010 and 2011 though growth has slowed in the past year.

Apple's iPhones, iPads and other gadgets are popular with China's highest-earning consumers but its fast-growing smartphone market is dominated by handsets that use rival Google Inc.'s Android system.

Cook was in Beijing to meet with Chinese regulators and managers of state-owned China Unicom Ltd., the first Chinese carrier to support Apple's iPhone.

Xinhua said Cook did not respond to rumors Apple might be developing a



In this Oct. 20, 2012 photo, Chinese people line up to enter a newly-opened Apple Store in Wangfujing shopping district in Beijing.

lower-cost iPhone for developing markets such as China. Also in Beijing, Cook met the chairman of China Mobile Ltd., the world's biggest phone carrier, with more than 700 million subscribers. China Mobile has no agreement to support the iPhone, and adding it as a partner would help Apple increase its appeal in China. China Mobile chairman Xi Guohua and Cook discussed "bilateral cooperation," the phone company said in a statement. It said release of oth-

er details was barred by a confidentiality agreement between the companies. China Mobile says its network already is used by several million customers who brought in unlocked iPhones from abroad. Apple opened a multistory flagship store on a prominent corner in Beijing's busy Wangfujing shopping district in October, raising its number of mainland retail outlets to 11. Independent stores also resell Apple products.

According to Xinhua, Cook

responded to complaints about wages and other work issues at Foxconn, the Taiwanese company that assembles Apple's products in vast factories in China, by saying his company enforces strict codes of conduct for its suppliers. "We care very deeply about every worker that touches an Apple product, whether they are making it, selling it, serving it or marketing it. We hold ourselves to a very high standard there," he was quoted as saying. □

UK recession worries grow on down data

DANICA KIRKA
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Concern is growing that the British economy may be headed back into recession after statistics released Friday showed a surprise drop in manufacturing activity. The Office for National Statistics said manufacturing output fell by 0.3 percent between October and November, far off analysts' expectations for an increase of 0.5 percent. Britain's economy has only just emerged from a double-dip recession in the third quarter of 2012, when it recorded 1 percent growth. But it seems unable to make a lasting recovery and experts say it is slowing considerably. Vicky Redwood, chief U.K. economist at Capital Economics said November's manufacturing figures "provided yet more evidence that the economy probably contracted in the fourth quarter of last year." The National Institute of Economic and Social Research, a leading think tank, estimated Friday that Britain's economy shrank by 0.3 percent in the fourth quarter. That would leave gross domestic product flat overall in 2012. If the British economy were to shrink again in the first three months of 2013, it would be back in recession, technically defined as two consecutive quarters of economic contraction. The Bank of England has kept its key interest rate at its record low of 0.5 percent since March 2009 and implemented a monetary stimulus program to help the economy recover. But the recovery has been uneven due, among other things, to sharp government cutbacks, financial troubles among key trading partners in Europe and a deep restructuring in key economic sectors like the banking industry. The Bank of England this week held off increasing the size of its stimulus program — under which it buys government bonds. □

CHRISTINA REXRODE
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Wells Fargo, the biggest U.S. mortgage lender, reported a 25 percent increase in fourth-quarter earnings Friday. The bank made more loans, set aside less money for potential defaults and enjoyed above-average returns from the investments made by its private equity business. The San Francisco-based bank was the first major lender to report fourth-quarter earnings. Revenue grew over the year in credit cards, wealth management and other units, and the bank brought in more in service charges and investment fees. Mortgage lending slowed from the third quarter, however. Revenue rose 7 percent, to \$21.9 billion, beating the \$21.3 billion expected by analysts polled by FactSet. Wells Fargo earned \$4.9 billion before paying divi-

dends on preferred stock. That amounted to 91 cents per share, more than the 87 cents per share and

mortgages were the main driver of the bank's results. The bank said it funded \$125 billion in mortgages,

some investors' concerns that the mortgage boom, which Wells Fargo is heavily dependent on, could be slowing.

Chief financial officer Tim Sloan said he was "very pleased" with the bank's performance, but also noted the "challenging" problems of "low interest rates and elevated unemployment." Low interest rates can hurt banks because they get a lower return from lending out money. Well's Fargo's net interest income fell 2 percent from the same period a year ago. The stock fell 40 cents, about 1 percent, to \$35 in pre-market trading.

Also top of mind was Monday's national foreclosure settlement, in which Wells Fargo and nine other banks agreed to spend a combined \$8.5 billion to settle the government's accusations that they had wrongfully foreclosed on some struggling borrowers. □

Wells Fargo climbs to higher profit in Q4



Wells Fargo, the biggest U.S. mortgage lender, says it earned a record \$4.9 billion in the fourth quarter, up 25 percent from the same period a year before.

(AP Photo/Matt Rourke)

lysts were expecting. In the same period a year earlier the bank earned \$3.9 billion, or 73 cents per share. As in the previous quarter,

up from \$120 billion in the same period a year ago. However, that was also down from \$139 billion in the third quarter, stoking

US trade gap hit \$48.7B in November

MARTIN CRUTSINGER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. trade deficit expanded in November to its widest point in seven months, driven by a surge in imports that outpaced only modest growth in exports. The Commerce Department said Friday that the trade gap widened 15.8 percent to \$48.7 billion in November from October. Imports grew 3.8 percent to \$231.3 billion, led by gains in shipments of cell phones, including Apple's new iPhone. Exports increased only 1 percent to \$182.6 billion. And exports to Europe fell 1.3 percent, further evidence of the prolonged debt crisis that has gripped the region. A wider trade deficit acts as a drag on U.S. growth. It typically means the U.S. is earning less on overseas sales while spending more on foreign products. Faster growth in exports helped the U.S. economy grow from July through September at an annual

rate of 3.1 percent. Most economists say growth has slowed in the October-

of the year. He expects fourth-quarter growth to be no more than a rate of



The container ship HS Bach is shown docked at the Port of Miami. The U.S. trade deficit expanded in November to its widest point in seven months, driven by a surge in imports that outpaced modest growth in exports.

(AP Photo/Wilfredo Lee)

December quarter to an annual rate of less than 2 percent, in part because of weaker exports. Paul Ashworth, chief U.S. economist at Capital Economics, predicts trade trimmed growth by about 0.5 percentage point in the final three months

1.5 percent. Through the first 11 months of 2012, the trade deficit is running at an annual rate of \$546.6 billion. That's roughly 2.4 percent lower than the 2011 deficit. Imports of consumer goods grew to \$45.3 billion in November, a monthly record.

Much of the growth was from cell phones and other household electronics products.

Oil imports dropped 2.5 percent, reflecting a fall in prices and lower volume. Imports of foreign-made autos and auto parts rose a sizable \$1.5 billion to \$25.6 billion November, likely reflecting catch-up shipments following port disruptions in October caused by Superstorm Sandy. The U.S. trade deficit with China, the largest with any country, totaled \$29 billion in November.

That's down slightly from the monthly record of \$29.5 billion in October. But the trade gap with China is still on track to set a new annual record in 2012.

Trade was a modest positive for overall economic growth in 2012 and many economists believe that trend will continue in 2013. However, that forecast is based on a view that the European debt crisis stabilizes and growth in Asia begins to rebound. □

China auto sales up in December

BEIJING (AP) — China's auto sales rose 7.1 percent in 2012 after growth accelerated in December as an economic recovery began to gain traction, an industry group reported Friday. Sales in the world's biggest market by number of vehicles sold totaled 15.5 million units, the China Association of Auto Manufacturers said. December sales rose 6.9 percent to 1.46 million vehicles. Global automakers are looking to China to drive revenues amid weakness elsewhere. But last year's growth was hampered by an economic slump and ownership restrictions imposed by some cities to curb traffic and smog. Full-year growth was healthy even though it came in below the CAAM's earlier forecast of 8 percent, said Zhang Xin, an industry analyst for Guotai Jun'an Securities in Beijing. "The purchasing power of Chinese auto customers is pretty good," said Zhang. "Growth in 2013 could be even better, even without any stimulus. And the new government also is advocating expanding domestic demand." The communist government is promoting auto manufacturing and ownership but has tried to fine-tune policies to encourage sales of smaller, more fuel-efficient vehicles. □

Stocks gain for second week, S&P still hot

STEVE ROTHWELL
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Stocks gained for a second straight week as company earnings reports started to come in, keeping the Standard and Poor's 500 index within a fraction of its highest level in five years. The S&P 500 was little changed Friday, and gained 5 points in the week to close at 1,472.05. The index is a fraction below its close of 1,472.12 Thursday, its highest level since December 2007.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 17.21 points to 13,488.43. The Nasdaq composite index rose 3.88 to 3,125.63. For the week, the Dow rose 53 and the Nasdaq rose 24.

Companies have started to report earnings for the fourth quarter of 2012, but no clear pattern has emerged as yet.

Aluminum company Alcoa gave stocks a lift after it reported earnings late Tuesday that matched analysts' expectations and said that demand was increasing.

Investors were unimpressed by Wells Fargo's record profits Friday, choosing instead to focus on the sustainability of those earnings.

"You've been hearing comments that earnings season is going to show a continued contraction in the rate of growth," said Robert Pavlik of Banyan

Partners. "People are conflicted, they are worried, but at the same time they don't want to be missing out on the action in the overall market."

Currently, analysts expect fourth quarter earnings for S&P 500 companies to grow at a rate of 3.3 percent, according to the latest data from S&P Capital IQ. That's a better growth

JPMorgan Chase, Goldman Sachs, U.S. Bancorp, Citigroup and Bank of America are among banks and financial companies reporting earnings next week. Financial stocks were the best performing industry group in the S&P 500 last year, gaining 26 percent. Other companies reporting earnings next week include eBay and In-

boost Thursday from reports suggesting the outlook for economic growth may be improving both in Europe and China.

Stocks are up on the year after lawmakers came up with a last-minute deal to prevent the U.S. from going over the "fiscal cliff." That averted the threat of a series of tax hikes and spending cuts Jan. 1 that economists say would almost certainly have pushed the U.S. economy into recession.

Avoiding the "cliff" will likely have boosted consumer confidence, said Chris Kichurchak, vice president at Strategic Wealth Partners. That improving sentiment, combined with a strengthening housing market, should prove favorable to so-called cyclical companies that move in line with the economy.

"There are a lot of people who were holding out on spending," before a budget deal was struck, said Kichurchak.

Investors started the year by jumping into stocks, according to Bank of America Merrill Lynch research. Just over \$22 billion was invested in equities in the first full week of this year, the second-highest weekly in-flow on record after the \$22.8 billion that was invested in September 2007. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note, which moves opposite to the security's price, fell 4 basis points to 1.86 percent. □



Specialist Edward Zelles works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.
(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

rate than the previous quarter, but it's considerably weaker than the 8.4 percent growth rate recorded in the same period last year.

Wells Fargo, the first major bank to report earnings, dropped even after the bank reported a 25 percent increase in fourth-quarter earnings. The bank's stock fell 30 cents, or 0.8 percent, to \$35.10.

Boeing fell \$1.93, or 2.5 percent, to \$75.16 after the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration said it is launching a comprehensive review of the critical systems of Boeing's 787, the aircraft maker's newest and most technologically advanced plane, after a fire and a fuel leak earlier this week.

The stock market got a

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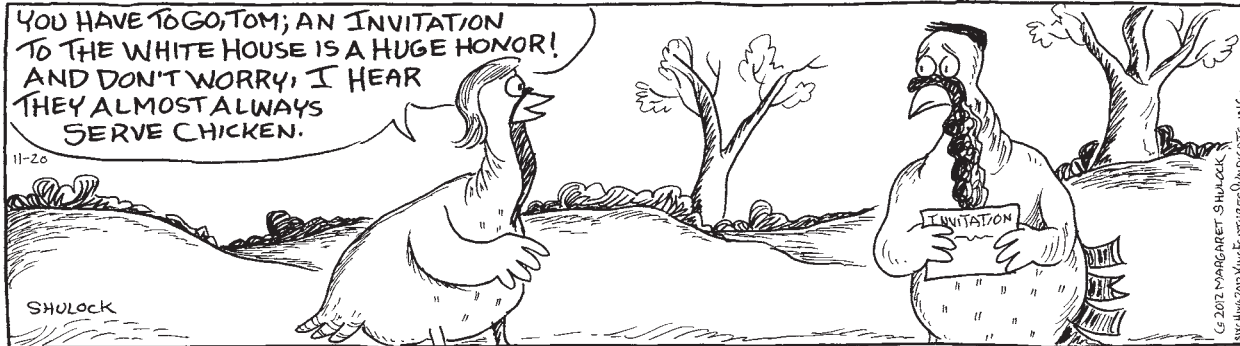


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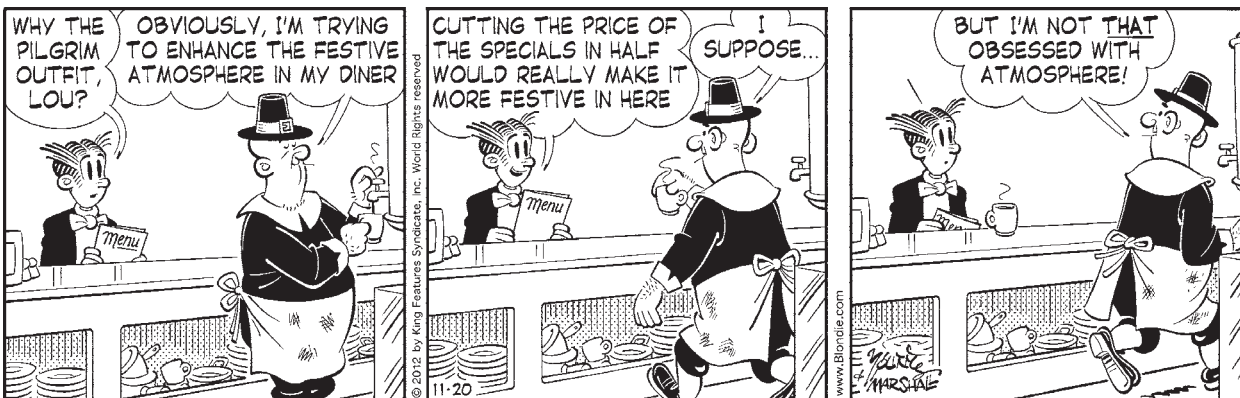
Mutts



6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

			2	4			
	9			7		6	
7		3			5		2
1			6	5			3
	8					5	
9			4	3			7
5		9			4		8
	2			9		1	
			5	7			

Difficulty Level ★★

11/20

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

3	1	8	7	5	4	9	2	6
5	7	2	3	6	9	1	4	8
4	6	9	1	2	8	5	3	7
6	9	1	2	3	5	7	8	4
2	4	5	8	1	7	6	9	3
8	3	7	9	4	6	2	1	5
7	2	4	5	9	3	8	6	1
9	5	3	6	8	1	4	7	2
1	8	6	4	7	2	3	5	9

ACROSS

- Bylaw
- apso; long-haired Tibetan dog
- Pizzazz
- Not closed
- Baseball's Hank
- Actress Barbara
- Yearn
- Beer mug
- Boyfriend
- Eternal
- Says over
- Hubbub
- Irritated
- Makes a salary
- Recline
- Out of; too far away to get
- Actor Garrett
- Hair product
- Nevada; western range
- Bunk or berth
- Excruciating
- Dine
- Tooth coating
- Wrath
- Walk the floor
- Challenged
- Purchase
- Dangers
- Runs fast
- Split-soup
- Too-lenient parent
- Insanity
- Walk around with a long face
- Fencing sword
- Not working
- Seep out
- Lopsided
- In a; feeling put-upon
- upon; trampled
- Lets a flat
- Evening bugle call

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14				15					16			
17				18					19			
20				21			22		23			
			24			25						
26	27	28			29			30	31	32	33	
34				35			36					
37				38			39			40		
41		42			43				44			
45					46				47			
			48	49			50					
51	52	53					54			55	56	57
58				59		60			61			
62				63					64			
65					66				67			

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

11/20/12

Monday's Puzzle Solved

FEB	ABYSS	SUDS
ADAM	SLOPE	ASIA
TIDE	SUGAR	FEES
TEETERING	ARTS	
TART	EAR	
STRICT	SPANIARD	
CRANK	RAINY	WOO
RUNG	FILET	HALO
ACT	TILER	BORER
MESSAGES	CARESS	
EMU	HAIR	
BABA	REBELLING	
EVIL	IDEAL	FOOD
TOTE	NERVE	YORE
AWED	ENTER	KEN

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11/20/12

DOWN

- Actor's part
- Come; find
- Ames & Asner
- Jeopardy
- Capital of Lithuania
- Receded
- Sports building
- "M*A*S*H" role
- Luau garland
- Regions
- the whip; lay down the law
- Detests
- Four qts.

- Take to court
- Ride a bike
- Cook in oil
- Earned
- Liberace, e.g.
- Bawl out
- as a lobster
- Actor Romero
- Divides
- Blemish
- Penniless
- Greek liqueur
- Become liquid
- Author Ferber
- Lose one's footing
- Matching pairs
- Canister

SSA retracts reprimand to flatulent worker

JESSICA GRESKO

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A U.S. government agency did more than wrinkle its nose at an employee's flatulence problem, issuing an official reprimand after months of malodors. But the agency said Friday that it has since retracted the rebuke.

The reprimand letter, which runs four pages and is dated Dec. 10, charges the employee of the Social Security Administration, which administers pensions, with "conduct unbecoming a federal employee" and "creating a hostile work environment" because of the repeated gas passing.

It says coworkers didn't want to work with the person because of the problem, which the employee seems to have attributed to lactose intolerance. The letter also contains a chart documenting 60 instances of flatulence, nine on one day in September.

The letter was originally posted on The Smoking Gun website with names blacked out.

Social Security Administration spokesman Mark Hinkle said Friday in a two-sentence email that the reprimand was rescinded a week after it was issued "when senior management became aware of the reprimand" and that the agency, which has its headquarters in a suburb outside of Baltimore, could not comment further because of "privacy concerns." He declined to say the employee's gender or where the person worked. According to the letter, at least three people tried to get to the bottom of the smelly situation with the employee beginning in May, when the employee's supervisor brought up the topic during a performance discussion.

The author of the reprimand letter, a manager, confronted the employee in July, noting several coworkers had complained and asking if "you could make it to the rest room before releasing the awful and unpleasant odor." The

employee apparently offered to try not to pass gas and to turn on a fan when it happened, but the letter writer says that solution wasn't satisfactory.

"I explained to you that turning on the fan would cause the smell to spread and worsen the air quality in the module," the letter writer chastises.

Later, after a conversation with a deputy division director, the employee blamed the problem on lactose intolerance and offered to purchase Gas-X. The deputy division director also asked that the employee investigate a medical explanation.

"He asked that you check with your doctor to see if there are other options to help you address your flatulence and that you could not pass gas indefinitely and continue to disrupt the work place," the letter says.

The employee submitted

information about medical conditions but nothing indicating "that you would have uncontrollable flatulence," according to the letter.

"It is my belief that you can control this condition," the letter writer says.

The employee's flatulent episodes were then documented by date and time over a three-month period beginning in September. The letter does not explain how the record was made. □



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ORANJESTAD
12 January
Dr. Samuels
13 January
Dr. Diantha de Cuba

Pharmacy on duty
ORANJESTAD:
Botica Oduber Tel: 582-1780

SAN NICOLAAS:
Botica San Nicolas Tel: 584-5712

Police

Police	581-1100
Oranjestad	582-4000
Noord	587-0009
Sta. Cruz	585-4710
Savaneta	584-7000
San Nicolas	584-5000

Emergency Numbers

Emergency	911
Police	100
Fire Dept.	115
Fire Dept. II	582-1108
Police Tipline	11141
Hospital	527-4000

Oranjestad

Ambulance	582-1234
Police	582-4000

San Nicolas

Ambulance	584-5050
Police Station	584-5000
BGD San Nicolas	584-1606
Valero Security	584-1720

Services

Information	118
Setar	582-5151
Taxi	582-2116
Taxi- Tas	587-5900
Profesional Taxi	588-0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587-2300
Service Aruba	583-3232

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Insel Air	Tel: 588-9314
Jet Blue	Tel: 588-2244
Spirit Airlines	Tel: 582-7117
Suriname Airways	Tel: 582-7896
Tiara Air	Tel: 588-4272
Venezolana	Tel: 583-7674

Foundation Fellowship Clinic
Tel: 584-6440
Alcoholism & Drug Addiction,
Anonymity guaranteed
Foundation Anti-Droga Aruba
(FADA) Tel: 583-2999
Foundation Respetami
Tel: 582-4433
Diabetic Foundation Arubano
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Whew! Big asteroid no longer threat to Earth

SETH BORENSTEIN
AP Science Writer

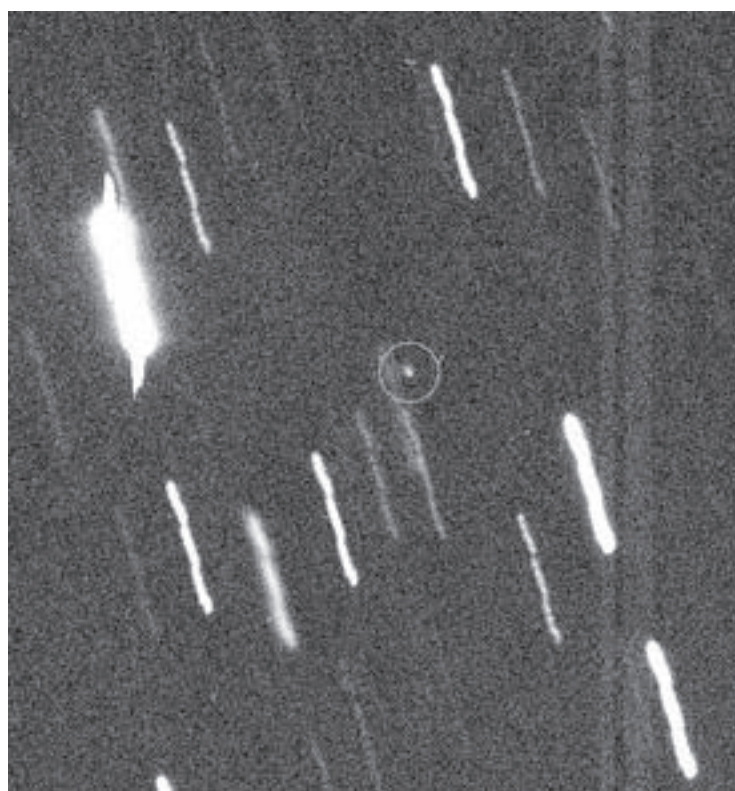
WASHINGTON (AP) — Upon further review, a big scary-sounding asteroid is no longer even a remote threat to smash into Earth in about 20 years, NASA says.

Astronomers got a much better look at the asteroid when it whizzed by Earth on Wednesday from a relative safe 9 million miles away. They recalculated the space rock's trajectory and determined it wasn't on a path to hit Earth on April 13, 2036 as once feared possible.

At more than 1,060 feet (323 meters) wide, the rock called Apophis could do significant damage to a local area if it hit and perhaps even cause a tsunami. But it was not large enough to trigger worldwide extinctions. One prominent theory that explains the extinctions of dinosaurs and other species 65 million years ago says a 6-mile (9.6-kilometer)-wide meteorite hit Earth and spewed vast amounts of dust into the air, cooling and darkening the planet. About nine years ago, when astronomers first saw Apophis, they thought there was a 2.7 percent chance that it would smack into our planet. Later, they lowered the chances to an even more unlikely 1 in 250,000.

Now it's never mind.

"Certainly 2036 is ruled



This undated image provided by NASA shows asteroid Adophis, circled, which was discovered on June 19, 2004.

Associated Press

out," said Donald Yeomans, manager of NASA's Near Earth Object Pro-

gram. "It's why we track them so we can be assured that they won't get

dangerously close."

Yeomans said now the asteroid, named after an evil Egyptian mythical serpent, won't get closer than 19,400 miles (31,200 kilometers). That's still the closest approach asteroid watchers have seen for a rock this large. And when astronomers got a closer look they noticed it was about 180 feet (54 meters) larger than they thought, but not a threat.

Asteroids circle the sun as leftovers of failed attempts to form planets billions of years ago. When asteroids enter Earth's atmosphere, they become meteors and when they hit the ground they are meteorites.

This is the second time in as many months the asteroid watchers have had good news for Earth. Last month, astronomers got a closer look at a smaller asteroid that they had pre-

viously calculated had a 1 in 500 chance of hitting Earth, this time in 2040. And they decided the 460-foot (140-meter) asteroid was no longer a threat.

If you still want to see a space rock come cosmically close to Earth, there's always next month.

On Feb. 15, a small asteroid, only 130-feet (40-meters) wide, will come close to Earth, about 17,000 miles (27,350 kilometers) above the equator. That's so close it will come between our planet and some of the more distant satellites that circle the globe. But it will miss Earth.

"This will be the closest passage of an object this size," Yeomans said.

That asteroid, called 2012 DA14, should be visible with smaller telescopes and binoculars, but mostly in Eastern Europe, Asia and Australia, he said. □

Locals say shifting sea ice frees trapped whales

MONTREAL (AP) — About a dozen killer whales trapped under sea ice appeared to be free after the ice shifted, village officials in Canada's remote north said Thursday, while residents who feared they would get

stuck elsewhere hired a plane to track them down. The whales' predicament in the frigid waters of Hudson Bay made international headlines, and locals had been planning a rescue operation with chain-



In this Tuesday, Jan. 8, 2013 photo provided by Marina Lacasse, killer whales surface through a small hole in the ice near Inukjuak, in Northern Quebec.

Associated Press

saws and drills before the mammals slipped away.

Tommy Palliser said two hunters from remote Inukjuak village reported that the waters had opened up around the area where the cornered whales had been bobbing frantically for air around a single, truck-sized hole in the ice. Officials said shifting winds might have pushed the ice away.

"It's certainly good news — that's good news for the whales," said Palliser, a business adviser with the regional government. But fears remained that the whales might have

been trapped elsewhere by the ever-moving ice. Some villagers were skeptical the killer whales had escaped harm, so the community hired an airplane to scan the region Thursday for signs of the pod.

Mark O'Connor of the regional marine wildlife board said the aerial search did not locate the orcas, but he noted that large swaths of ice-free water were seen in the area.

"So as far as I could tell, the emergency, for sure, is averted," said O'Connor, the board's director of wildlife management. □

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Kimmel says he expects to run 3rd in late night

DAVID BAUDER
AP Television Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Jimmy Kimmel says he expects to settle in at third place in the ratings behind Jay Leno and David Letterman, even as one week of direct competition suggests a healthy competition. There were backstage smiles at Kimmel's Los Angeles studio Friday after Nielsen ratings showed the ABC comic had his largest audience ever on Thursday.

This is the first week for "Jimmy Kimmel Live" in the high-profile 11:35 p.m. Eastern (0335 GMT) time slot, directly competing with Leno on NBC and Letterman on CBS.

Kimmel announced that Matt Damon would be a guest on his Jan. 24 show — really. Damon's been the subject of a long-running joke, with Kimmel frequently joking at the end of his show that he ran out of time and couldn't get Da-

mon on the air as planned. "People like the drama of late night — 'Who will be the king of late night?'" Kimmel said.

"Johnny Carson retired with the crown. There will be no king of late night anymore." Kimmel finished second behind Leno in viewership Tuesday, his first night in the time slot, and third the next two nights. ABC looks most closely at the 18- to 49-year-old demographic, however. Among those youthful viewers, Kimmel finished second to Leno on Tuesday, virtually tied with him Wednesday, and won handily Thursday, Nielsen said. He gained in young viewers each of the three nights.

The numbers are close. Among all viewers Thursday, Leno was seen by 3.4 million people, Letterman by 3.29 million and Kimmel by 3.17 million, Nielsen said. "It's an encouraging start for them," said Brad Adgate, researcher at Ho-

rizon Media. "This is something where they aren't looking at the first week. They're looking at a year from now, three years from now, five years from now when Leno and Letterman may leave their desks."

Kimmel, whose show spent a decade airing a half hour later, said he didn't explicitly push ABC to move him up. But he did let his bosses know he was ready. Asked when he let them know, he joked, "probably the first night."

The later time slot had benefit, though.

"It allowed me time to develop, instead of what usually happens, which is you have to develop the show under the hot spotlight," he said.

Damon was part of a turning point for him. When the actor performed in a lewdly titled short film with Kimmel's then-girlfriend, Sarah Silverman, it got a great buzz and directed attention to the program.



This July 25, 2012 photo released by ABC shows Jimmy Kimmel hosting his late night show "Jimmy Kimmel Live," in the Hollywood section of Los Angeles. Kimmel said on Friday, Jan. 11, 2013, that "Jimmy Kimmel Live" has scheduled Matt Damon as a guest on Jan. 24. Associated Press

Kimmel said Letterman called to wish him well in his new time slot. Leno hasn't, although that's not a surprise: Kimmel is firmly in the Letterman camp as a fan

and has been sharply critical of Leno.

"You can't discount the legacy the 'Tonight' show has had and how ingrained it is in people's habits," Kimmel said.

"You can't discount that. We were No. 1 last night (in the young demographic), but don't get used to it."

Some high-profile Kimmel assignments during the past year, including speaking the White House Correspondents' Association dinner, prepared him for the move, said Jill Lederman, the show's executive producer.

"There were so many things that happened for him last year that we felt there was this groundswell of support," Lederman said. "Every time he had one of those opportunities he did a beautiful job, he executed it so seamlessly.

That has ushered us into a whole new chapter of this show's life." □

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ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi, a true native Aruban started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced hand rolled cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrocchi always had a interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crops. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba, he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The whole process took him 10 years to perfect. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the moulding and process of making a

perfect cigar which takes a long time. Their handmade cigar box is specially designed with their "Aruhiba" logo. Petrocchi considers Aruhiba as a promotion for Aruba through its fine cigars. The company sells Aruhiba to the international markets as well. Visit their retail store located in front of the Historic Dutch Windmill in front of the Westin Resort, with any purchase of \$20 and up you receive a free "Aruhiba" cigar or ask for their gift box of 5 cigars get 1 FREE for only \$37. They open from Monday to Saturday from 9 am till 6:30 pm and on Sundays from 9 am to 1 pm. Aruhiba cigars are now available at the gift stores in your resort

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Britney Spears' fiancé resigns as co-conservator

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Britney Spears capped a week of changes Friday with a judge accepting the resignation of her one-time fiancé from the conservatorship that oversees many of her personal and financial matters. Jason Trawick submitted his resignation and it was accepted Friday by Superior Court Judge Reva Goetz, who did not elaborate on a reason for the agent's exit from the case less than a year after he joined it. Spears and Trawick have reportedly broken up, although attorneys for the singer's father and another co-conservator, Andrew Wallet, declined to discuss their relationship Friday. Emails sent to Spears' publicist, Jeff Raymond, were not immediately returned. Spears has been under a court-supervised conservatorship since February 2008, with her father and Wallet having control over numerous aspects of her personal life. The case was opened after several incidents of erratic behavior by the pop singer and a pair of hospitalizations, but Spears has recovered and recently served as a judge

on Fox's "The X Factor." Spears ended that relationship this week, informing the network she would not return next season and planned to focus on her music. Trawick and Spears were engaged in December 2011 and he was appointed a co-conservator along with her father, Jamie, in April. Jamie Spears met with Goetz for about an hour Friday but left before a hearing where Trawick's resignation was announced. Trawick has served as Spears' agent, and the pair started dating in 2009. The celebrity website TMZ reported Friday that the pair had broken up. Trawick did not have authority over Spears' finances, which have recovered since her public meltdown. Goetz recently reviewed and approved of an accounting that showed Spears ended 2010 with more than \$27.5 million in assets, including nearly \$15 million in cash. Attorneys handling the case are expected to file updated financial statements in the coming months. □

Evan Rachel Wood, Jamie Bell expecting first child

NEW YORK (AP) — Evan Rachel Wood is going to be a mom. Wood's publicist, Amanda Silverman, said Friday the 25-year-old actress and her husband, Jamie Bell, are expecting their first child later this year. She said Wood and Bell are "thrilled." The couple married last year. They first dated in 2005 but broke up the following year. Wood's breakout role was in 2003's gritty film "Thirteen." In 2011, she co-starred with Kate Winslet in the HBO miniseries "Mildred Pierce." Both roles earned her Golden Globe nominations. Bell, 26, is best known for his starring role in "Billy Elliott."



This Feb. 14, 2012 file photo shows actress Evan Rachel Wood at the unveiling of "The Ever Changing Face of Beauty" video installation by fashion photographer Solve Sundsbo at the Park Avenue Armory in New York.

Associated Press

His film credits also include "King Kong" and "The Adventures of Tintin." Us Weekly first reported Wood's pregnancy. □

A new Carrie glows in a 'Sex and the City' prequel



This undated image released by The CW shows AnnaSophia Robb as Carrie Bradshaw in "The Carrie Diaries." The new hour-long drama premieres Monday at 8 p.m. EST on the CW.

Associated Press.

FRAZIER MOORE
AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Once upon a time, Carrie Bradshaw was a virgin. Hard to believe. When viewers met her 15 years ago in HBO's hit comedy "Sex and the City," Carrie, as played by Sarah Jessica Parker, was a self-styled "sexual anthropologist" who wrote a New York newspaper column based on her ongoing "research," ably assisted by her femship with three gal pals. Now comes a new series that does for Carrie Bradshaw what "Superboy" comics did for Superman. "The Carrie Diaries" turns back the clock to the high school blossoming of Carrie as a writer, woman and passionate would-be Manhattanite. "The Carrie Diaries" could easily have been a needless prequel to the original's six seasons, an extension of a brand that, by some appraisals, had already overstayed its welcome as two feature films in 2008 and 2010. Instead, this new hour-long drama, which premieres Monday at 8 p.m. EST on the CW, is pretty terrific and remarkably faithful to its heroine. If "Sex and the City" has a soul (does any TV series have a soul?), then "The Carrie Diaries" has tapped it. The series can boast key

pieces of the original's DNA, including executive producers Amy Harris and Candace Bushnell, the real-life sex columnist who created Carrie Bradshaw as her fictional surrogate. Another winning ingredient: its star, AnnaSophia Robb, who serves as a perfect proto-Sarah Jessica Parker. Watching "The Carrie Diaries" in its circa-1984 Connecticut environs, you believe that this is the girl who would become the Carrie you know so well. In a recent interview, Robb says her sole encounter with Parker (who isn't involved in the new series) was "for a few seconds" at a fashion show. But she agrees it might be fun for them to have a consultation. Then she changes her mind. No need! Her Carrie came first! "This is a Carrie who isn't sure of her creative voice, her sexuality, her way of dressing," Robb points out. "I think it will be fun for the original 'Sex and the City' audience to see what Carrie was like in her younger days — what made her fall in love with New York and why her relationships are so riddled with problems." She laughs affectionately. "And it introduces the franchise to a whole new audience that's never seen 'Sex and the City.'" That, of course, represents a big chunk of the CW

demo. It includes Robb, now 19, who, not so long ago, had never seen the sassy, often racy, progenitor of the show she soon would be starring in. "My mom wouldn't let me. I was too young," she explains. "But once I heard they were making 'The Carrie Diaries,' I bought all the seasons of 'Sex and the City' on iTunes and realized, 'Omgod, this is such a brilliant show!'" It's around 5 p.m. as Robb, having finished an unusually "short" recent workday, is nursing a fruit smoothie at a diner she frequents near her downtown Manhattan digs. She is wearing a Breck (Breckenridge) T-shirt that reflects her Colorado roots, black leggings and vibrant cobalt-blue fingernail polish (the latter required for Carrie). She has an impossibly angelic face and enormous green eyes and, though petite at 5-feet-2, seems poised to be the next big thing. One clue: That very morning, a paparazzo had greeted her outside her apartment for the first time. "I find it a bit peculiar," she concedes. "Until now, I don't think any of them really cared." This is not to suggest that AnnaSophia Robb is a show-biz newcomer. At 9, the little girl who was determined to act was journeying with her parents from her Denver home to Los Angeles, where, right away, she booked a McDonald's commercial. Soon after, she landed a starring role in "Because of Winn-Dixie." Her dozen films also include "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," "Sleepwalking" and "Soul Surfer," in which she played the real-life surfer who lost an arm to a shark but didn't lose her love of surfing. A year ago, Robb was waiting for responses to her college applications when she got a peek at the "Carrie Diaries" script. □

The Woes Of Roe



GAIL COLLINS
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Forty years ago this month, the Supreme Court handed down the great abortion rights decision *Roe v. Wade*. To be honest, you're not going to be seeing a whole lot of cake and Champagne. Time magazine recognized the occasion with a downbeat cover story. ("They've Been Losing Ever Since.") Gallup polls suggest that support for abortion rights is fading, particularly among young Americans, and that more people now regard themselves as "pro-life" than "pro-choice."

On the other hand — I know you had faith that eventually we'd get to the other hand — the polls depend on the question. According to the Quinnipiac poll, if you ask Americans whether they agree with the *Roe* decision, nearly two-thirds say yes.

It's always been this way. Americans are permanently uncomfortable with the abortion issue, and they respond most positively to questions that suggest it isn't up to them to decide anything. "Should be a matter between a woman and her doctor" is usually a popular option.

Whatever recent changes there are in public opinion may be less about abortion than about the term "pro-choice." This week, Planned Parenthood unveiled a pile of new research, some of which suggests that younger women don't like labels. Or at least not that one.

"We've been discussing changing our name for the past year or so," said Kelsey Warrick, a Georgetown University student who's president of Hoyas for Choice.

Maybe it's like feminism, a word with a glorious history that's rejected by many young people who are staunchly in favor of women's rights. Maybe, as Dawn Laguens, the executive vice president of Planned Parenthood, suggested at a news conference this week, it's just that young women feel as though they're up to their ears in choices already.

We may never know, although if pro-choice activists want to rebrand themselves the Movement for Leaving Women Alone, it's likely nobody under the age of 50 would object.

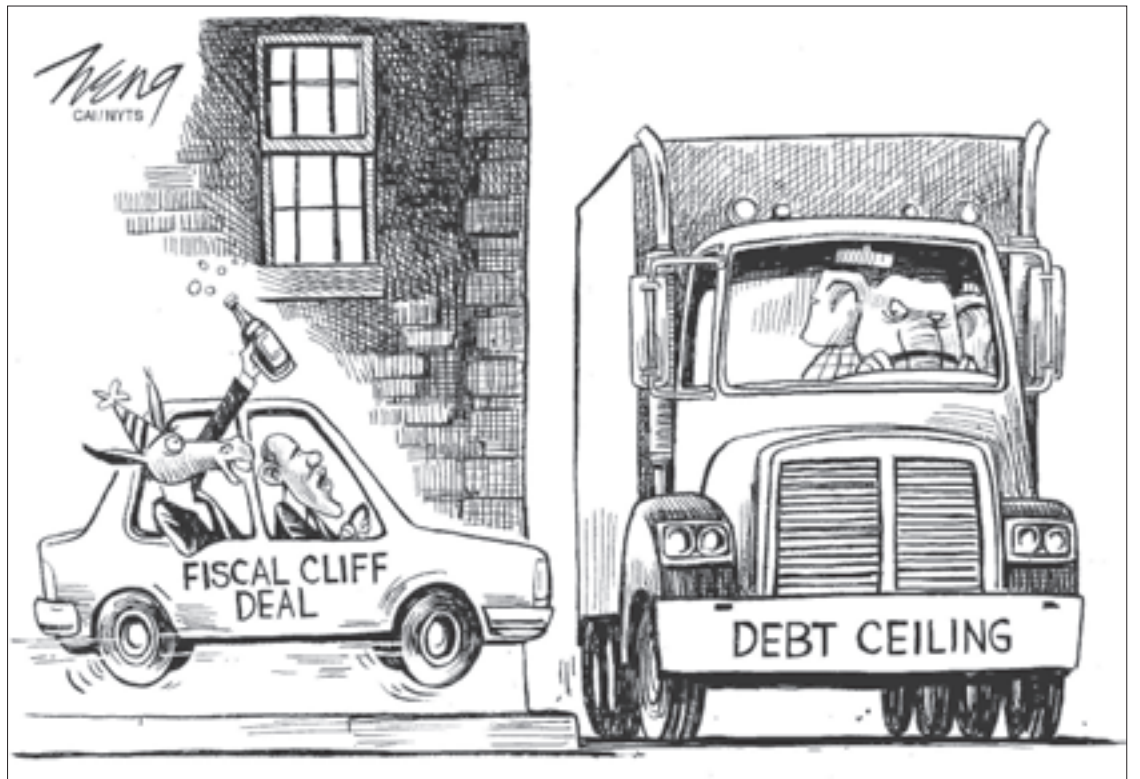
One way or another, the abortion rights cause needs all the help it can get. Abortion clinics around the country are reeling under crazy new rules that make

it impossible for them to operate. In Virginia, the state board of health is demanding that clinics follow the same architectural standards as hospitals, including 5-foot-wide hallways. In Texas, the Legislature is considering a law that would require that all abortions be performed in ambulatory surgical centers. When the state passed that requirement for pregnancies beyond 16 weeks in 2004, every single clinic doing that procedure was forced to shut down. Only a handful managed to reopen — in a state that encompasses more than 261,000 square miles.

In Mississippi, the state's one and only abortion clinic, the Jackson Women's Health Organization, is in danger of closing because of a new law requiring that any doctor who does abortions have admitting privileges at a local hospital. This would be less of a problem if the local hospitals were not all terrified of giving privileges to anybody who performs abortions. When the clinic tried to advertise for a doctor who already had the requisite affiliation, the state medical journal refused to take the ad.

"We're just doing business as usual. Trying to be there for the women of Mississippi," said Betty Thompson, the former director who stayed on after she retired and is now working as a counselor. Over the past 40 years, women seeking abortions have been put through a lot of unnecessary trauma. Trips of hundreds of miles to the nearest clinic. Requirements that they have ultrasounds, or have ultrasounds and listen to the physician describe the ultrasound, or have ultrasounds and then wait 24 hours before the procedure. (In Texas, the doctor who does the abortion also has to conduct the ultrasound, creating a scheduling nightmare.) They're caught in the middle of a political fight over a deeply personal issue that leaves most Americans feeling uneasy. If you want to rack up a real positive response on a poll, ask people whether the women or the politicians should make decisions about their pregnancies. One of the surveys commissioned by Planned Parenthood showed 83 percent of likely voters picked the women, including 64 percent of those who called themselves pro-life.

If there's been any permanent message in this long battle, that's been it. No matter how conservative the state, sooner or later you will hit the point where the people object to politicians messing with a woman's private business. Mississippi voters rejected a statewide referendum to give any fetus the right of "personhood." Voters in South Dakota, another state with a single, struggling, abortion clinic, have twice rejected total abortion bans. Every time the anti-abortion movement pushes too far, it reminds people that its cause, no matter how filled with moral fervor, is basically about imposing one particular theology on the rest of the country. Over the long run, the nervous, ambivalent, uncomfortable public won't let that happen. □



In Defense Of Hagel For Defense



NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF
© 2013 New York Times

Critics are pounding President Barack Obama's choice for defense secretary, Chuck Hagel, as soft on Iran, anti-military and even anti-Semitic. This is a grotesque caricature of a man who would make a terrific defense secretary.

It's true that Hagel harbors a healthy skepticism about deploying American troops. That's because he also harbors shrapnel in his chest from Vietnam and appreciates the human costs when Pentagon officials move pins on maps.

In Vietnam, Hagel rescued his unconscious brother (who served in the same unit) from a troop carrier that had hit a mine. The incident left Hagel with blown eardrums, bad burns and an important take-away.

"I'm not a pacifist. I believe in using force, but only after a very careful decision-making process," Hagel later told Vietnam magazine. "The night Tom and I were medevaced out of that village in April 1968, I told myself: If I ever get out of this and I'm ever in a position to influence policy, I will do everything I can to avoid needless, senseless war."

How refreshing to imagine decisions about war made by brave doves rather than by chicken hawks.

"Too often in Washington, the is-

sue of intervention becomes an abstraction, a policy debate," noted Richard Haass, the president of the Council on Foreign Relations and a former senior State Department official. "I like the idea that somebody at the table sees it in terms of people." Brent Scowcroft, the former national security adviser and doyen of serious Republican thinkers on foreign policy, told me: "I think he would be an outstanding secretary of defense." Scowcroft noted that top officials are sometimes tempted to turn to military force "as a way of cleaning up problems quickly" without appreciating the complexities, while Hagel would be a counterweight who understands the messiness of combat.

That would be useful because America's biggest foreign policy mistake in this new century has been overdeploying troops. Obama's own biggest blunder was tripling the number of U.S. forces in Afghanistan. We have, so far, sunk \$640 billion into Afghanistan and more than \$800 billion into Iraq — all told, according to my calculation, more than \$12,000 per U.S. household.

Imagine if those sums had been spent on, say, early childhood education in America. Or on getting more kids through college. Or on global education: About 1 percent of the total sunk in Iraq and Afghanistan, if instead spent annually on schooling around the world, would allow every child worldwide to complete primary school, ending global illiteracy.

The nastiest and most shameful innuendo about Hagel is that he is anti-Semitic.

A Wall Street Journal column suggested as much, and Elliott Abrams, a former George W. Bush administration official, asserted that Hagel "appears to be a(euro) [an anti-Semite]." I'm standing up for Hagel right now partly because I find this so offensive.

The "evidence" is that Hagel once referred to the term "Jewish lobby" rather than "Israel lobby," and that he has generally

been more willing to criticize Israeli policies than many of America's feckless politicians.

For starters, "Jewish lobby" is a term that has been widely used: A search of "Jewish lobby" on the website of Haaretz, the Israeli newspaper, has 27 pages of citations. And Haaretz has criticized Israeli policies much more harshly than Hagel.

Leaders of Jewish organizations themselves have used the term "Jewish lobby." Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, used the term a couple weeks ago.

It's bullying and name-calling to denounce people as anti-Semitic because they won't embrace the policies of a far-right Israeli government that regularly shoots itself in the foot.

In a world in which anti-Semitism actually does persist, this is devaluing the term so that it becomes simply a glib right-wing insult. Maybe that's why Jewish Voice for Peace, a liberal American Jewish organization, has announced that its supporters have sent 10,000 emails to Obama in support of Hagel's nomination.

As for Iran, Hagel will need to sound more hawkish in public to mesh with the administration, and it is useful for Iran to worry about a military strike. But I hope that Hagel, in private, continues to be cautious.

Obama has been painting himself in a corner so that if a nuclear deal with Tehran isn't reached, he would have to order bombings sometime in 2013 or 2014. A skeptic at the Pentagon would be a useful addition to that debate.

As a journalist who spends a good deal of time in the field, I am often alarmed that Washington policymaking can become an echo chamber reinforcing the prejudices of whoever is in charge without giving weight to inconvenient complexities on the ground. With his combat experience, Chuck Hagel would offer not an echo but a thoughtful and independent voice. □

Genuine Subculture: Where Pinball Wizards Still Roam

WILLIAM GRIMES

© 2013 New York Times

NEW YORK – Most of the patrons at Mission Dolores in the Park Slope neighborhood of Brooklyn go for craft beers like Dark Horse Scotty Karate Scotch Ale or the house pour, Narragansett Lager. But some do not make it as far as the bar.

Lured by twinkling lights, they step up to the three vintage pinball machines stationed just inside the entrance, reach into

fes and some truly odd outposts scattered across the five boroughs of New York, the flippers are still flapping. Some of them belong to reconditioned machines from defunct companies like Williams and Bally. Others can be found on new games from Stern, for several years the sole remaining pinball manufacturer in the United States until an upstart, Jersey Jack Pinball, entered the market in January 2011.

Family; and young players who usually approach their first pinball machine skeptically but quickly succumb.

Young can be very, very young. At Sunshine Laundromat in the Greenpoint neighborhood of Brooklyn last week, Adlai Sharff, 3, was balanced atop a stool and deftly manipulating the flippers on Monster Bash, a vintage Williams machine that pits players against the Creature From the Black La-

Rotter, 44, had brought his 6-year-old son, Felix Rotter-McCartney, and turned him loose on the machine.

"We've been doing this since he was 4," Rotter said. "It's something we can do together, and I can have a beer." When asked to explain the appeal of the game, Felix said, "It's kind of a giant maze."

Good answer, Junior. A pinball machine is indeed like a maze. If Joseph

peasants to revolt and save a damsel in distress. When bombarded successfully, the castle rocks back and forth, its towers swaying. The machine is well known among cognoscenti for the voices that Tina Fey did for the female characters, back when she was still an unknown actress performing with Second City in Chicago.

Games like Medieval Madness keep loyalists on the move. Pinball fans map out itineraries and roam from bar to bar, relying on word of mouth or pinball websites like pinballnyc.com and nycpinballleague.com.

In Manhattan the East Village and the Lower East Side dominate. Reciprocal Skateboards, on East 11th Street, leads the pack. The owner, Jon Ehrlich, added an annex to the skate shop that has let him install nine machines from his collection of nearly 50.

On Saturday the shop will play host to Pinferno, the seventh edition of a tournament that originated in Ehrlich's apartment and now attracts top players from all over the United States.

Pinball fans tend to see a glass half full when they discuss their sport. Josh Sharpe, the president of the International Flipper Pinball Association, in Chicago, points out that when his organization began ranking players in 2006, the list ran to 500 names. The total now stands at 14,000. Last summer 500 players competed in the world championships, held in Pittsburgh. If there is a pinball renaissance, as boosters like to claim, it seems to hover somewhere in the middle distance, unless you live in pinball-mad cities like Portland, Ore. In New York, fans still have to work at it, but the rewards are just as sweet. Like great poetry, pinball transports. "It makes you forget where you are," Ehrlich said. "It takes you out of life." □



Adam Cane, left, and Ian Harbor play on pinball machines at Reciprocal Skateboards in New York. Long eclipsed by video games, pinball machines can still be played in bars, cafes and some truly odd outposts across New York.

(Willie Davis/The New York Times)

their pockets for quarters and indulge in one of the greatest of all American pastimes, the pursuit of the silver ball.

Pinball is a genuine subculture. Lawn tennis or duckpin bowling might be more obscure, but not much.

Once a popular attraction at arcades and bars across the United States, pinball went into a death spiral in the early 1980s, done in by video games, and it has struggled ever since.

Yet, against the odds, the sport survives. In bars, ca-

Much excitement has been generated by Jersey Jack's debut game, The Wizard of Oz, which is scheduled to ship in late February, ruby-slipper flippers and all. A Hobbit game follows.

Although heavily skewed toward men, pinball attracts a diverse group. There are middle-aged players nostalgic for games like Bally's Wizard and Gottlieb's Roller Coaster; players in their 30s who grew up with movie-theme games like Terminator 2: Judgment Day and The Addams

goon, Dracula and other cinematic ghouls.

"Now he wakes up in the morning and asks, 'Is it laundry day?'" his mother, Kari, said with a sigh. The laundromat is a veritable Venusberg of temptations, with five beckoning machines. "I spend \$60 a month on pinball because of my son," Sharff said. "It's becoming a problem."

At Skylark, a bar in Park Slope with a retro-diner ambience, two dads bent over Harlem Globetrotters, a Bally machine introduced in 1979. Jeff

Campbell were alive today, he might speak of the heroic quest, in which the bold but innocent ball ventures forth into a world teeming with unexpected dangers but holding the promise of rich rewards. Medieval Madness, for example, a highly sought-after Williams game that made its debut in 1997, requires the player to storm a multiturreted three-dimensional castle with portcullis and drawbridge. To do this, he or she must defeat a pair of green trolls that pop up from time to time, inspire the